BOOK NO.
973.91 B314
ACCESSION
119402

FORM 3431 20M 2-39

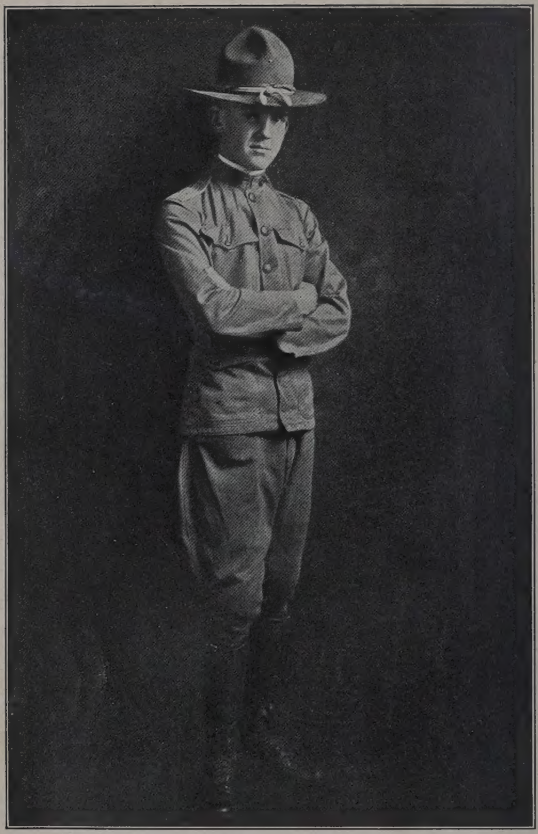
SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 1223 00726 5615

DATE DUE

JAN 20 1998

HIGHSMITH #45230

Printed
In USA



THE AUTHOR

Watching and Waiting On the Border

By Roger Batchelder

Ex-Private Machine-Gun Company
Eighth Massachusetts Regiment
National Guard

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
E. ALEXANDER POWELL
AND WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

Boston and New York
Houghton Mifflin Company
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1917

COPYRIGHT, 1917, BY ROGER BATCHELDER

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

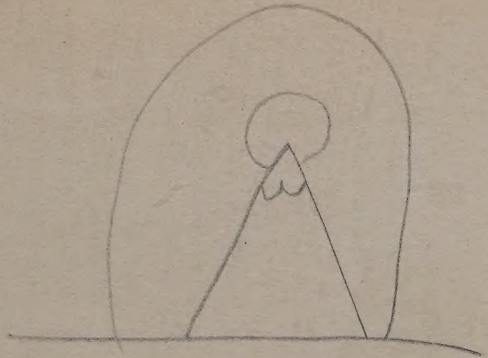
Published May 1917

973.91
B314
119402

ST. PAUL PUBLIC LIBRARY

3 1223 00726 5615

To my one hundred and fifty thousand comrades, who, during the summer and fall of 1916, offered to uphold the honor and integrity of their country, this volume is dedicated.



Preface

"Was it really hot down there?"

"Did you like it?"

"What are Mexicans like?"

"What about army life?"

In writing this story of my experiences at the Mexican border, I have tried to answer such questions as the above — questions which people have asked me daily since my return. The average person has read in the newspapers that it was very hot in Texas, that the National Guard could whip its weight in wildcats (according to officers of the Guard), and that as a fighting organization, it is in a class with the Boy Scouts (according to some army officers). He believes that the Mexican is a bloodthirsty animal which inhabits the wilderness beyond the Rio Grande, and he has the conviction that fifty thousand Americans could clean up that country in a month. But as he has read only the vague and contradictory reports of the press concerning the border service of the Guard, he knows nothing of our life there, our pleas-

ures, our hardships. It has been my aim to give the public an accurate account of the experiences of a Guardsman, a personal account, yet one which is absolutely characteristic, and applicable to thousands of men who saw service under like circumstances.

I have also attempted to show, by narrating the story of the mobilization and the subsequent service of the National Guard, how pitifully incompetent and unprepared it was and is, to form the reserve military force of the United States. If I can merely impress this fact upon my readers, the object of the book will have been attained.

Since this book was written, the United States has declared war on Germany; the country is about to plunge its vast resources into the European whirlpool. It is indeed fortunate that we have allies to bear the brunt of the burden; certainly we could not bear it ourselves at the present time. We all realize how woefully unprepared we are for the war which the pacifists and the Germans said in the past was "the product of fevered brains — an idle dream." Yet this is not the time to criticize or to dwell

uselessly on the past; it is the time for action, and the American people are ready for action. The change which has come over the country within the past month is marvelous, but it is typical of the American people and their spirit. We are no longer a collection of political, sectional, and factional units; we are a united nation of undoubted solidarity. Fortunately our position is such that we can coolly look ahead and figure out what must be done. We cannot prepare in a day or a month; a year, at least, is necessary. We must start with the elements; we must devise definite systems to produce the desired military efficiency. The first basic element of this reconstruction is, of course, compulsory service. Had it been adopted five years ago, we should have no difficulty now; we should not need a year to train men. The National Guard, in spite of its admirable spirit, particularly at the present time, is lamentably incapable of facing a fighting power. Compulsory service will be our salvation.

Some may claim that in this book I have criticized unwarrantedly and that I am prejudiced. I am prejudiced. Mr. E. Alexander

Powell said, after seeing the devastation of Belgium, "I admit that I am no longer neutral." And after having seen the results of unpreparedness and having realized the incompetency that followed, I can no longer listen to theories of Arcadian idealism. Deeply graven in my memory is the picture of the National Guard, departing, unprepared and unequipped, supposedly for war. The thought of a combat between a trained veteran unit and a Guard organization is appalling. And since there is no other remedy, I look hopefully toward compulsory service as the means of saving my country.

In the following pages I am not criticizing the officers or men of the Guard. However inefficient they may have been, they were conscientious and untiring in their energy. They had performed that duty in the past which supposedly fitted them for war, many at great personal sacrifice. The officers had done their best, hampered by scanty appropriations and the general indifference of the public. If they were not prepared for war, it was not their fault; it was the fault of the system — a system which

drills men for two hours a week, neglects their needs for accouterments, asks a few to perform the duty of the many, and expects to institute a first-class fighting machine. Such expectation would be humorous, were it not now so tragic.

For our regular army I have nothing but praise. Its only fault is its pitiful size. The soldiers are well-trained fighting men, and are second to none. The officers are thoroughly efficient, masters of the trade of war, experts of a great vocation.

If we now call to arms and thoroughly train two million men, we shall have the basis for an efficient reserve force which can stand behind an adequate regular army and navy at any time, and we need then have no doubt concerning the future. After we have done our bit in quelling the Kaiser's aspiration to become a second Alexander, we can look forward to unbroken peace and unparalleled prosperity; for no one would attack or menace America prepared. Is it not worth while?

I have no apology to make for my arraignment of the Texans. Every Guardsman with

whom I have spoken has condemned their attitude; every written account which I have read has commented bitterly upon it. I think that their conduct toward the uniform (unless, of course, the wearer had the gold braid — the emblem of "an officer and a gentleman") was outrageous. I do not deplore the lack of "pink teas"; I merely claim that a soldier, or a Guardsman, should at least be treated as a man, and not as the Texans treat a Mexican.

People frequently ask the question, "But was n't it a great experience? Are n't you glad you went?" My answer is "Yes!" to both questions. As I look about while writing, I see here a khaki belt, here a weather-beaten campaign hat, there a clip of cartridges, and in the corner an army-trunk, covered with alkali dust-stains. All are memories of my "great adventure." I go back to Texas in pleasant reminiscence. I have no regrets; no privations or hardships were caused by my absence. It was an incident which I recall with a touch of pleasure, although the prospect of a recurrence would be far from agreeable.

I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to

the following gentlemen: to Mr. John A. Happer, of El Paso, for great kindness to me during my service; to Mr. E. Alexander Powell, for invaluable criticism and suggestion; and above all, to my father, without whose inspiration and encouragement I should never have written this volume.

ROGER BATCHELDER

WORCESTER, MASS.,
April 15, 1917

Contents

INTRODUCTION xix

I. WE SPRING TO ARMS OVERNIGHT 1

II. UNDER CANVAS 12

III. OFF AT LAST FOR THE BORDER 29

IV. THE CITY OF TENTS 46

V. THE WELCOME TO TEXAS 60

VI. THE STEADY GRIND 68

VII. OUTPOST DUTY 81

VIII. THE BIG RAINS 93

IX. DRILLS AND RUMORS 108

X. AL FRESCO WITH REAL MEXICANS 141

XI. "THE KING OF FRANCE WITH TWICE TEN THOUSAND MEN" 151

XII. THE GREAT HIKE 162

XIII. HOME 201

XIV. THE EFFECT OF THE MEDICINE 206

Illustrations

THE AUTHOR . . . . . *Frontispiece*

COMPANY STREET AT FRAMINGHAM 16

REGIMENTAL STREET AND COOK-SHACKS AT FRAMINGHAM 16

TYPHOID INOCULATION 42

CORRAL 46

REGIMENTAL STREET AT CAMP COTTON 46

MORNING DRILL AT CAMP COTTON 58

CHURCH 58

JUST TEXAS! 62

TYPICAL MEXICAN VILLAGE IN TEXAS 62

"ON THE FRONTIER OF CIVILIZATION" 66

OFF FOR TOWN 72

WASHING UP AFTER MESS 72

MORNING EXERCISE 76

ONE OF THE BRIDGES 82

EL TORO 86

CAMP AND CEMENT PLANT 86

THE CORRAL AT THE CEMENT PLANT 90

OFF FOR HOME 90

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS 94

CLEANING CLIPS 94

Illustrations

A "Troubadour" 98
The Rio Grande 106
The Author and his "Indian" 106
Company at Retreat 110
Through the Foot-Hills 110
Five Minutes' Halt 136
The Brigade March 136
The Picnic 146
Past the Reviewing Stand 152
An Ohio Company 152
The Sea of Men 154
The Parade Halts 154
"Me 'n' Al" 156
Billy, of the Mascot Army 160
"Action Front" 164
The Supply Wagons 164
The Author with a Machine Gun 174

From photographs by the Author

Introduction

We are a peculiarly inconsistent people. We boast — rather too loudly at times — of our business ability, our energy, our far-sightedness, our acumen. And, in matters commercial, that boast is not unjustified. It is all the more astounding, therefore, that, in our attitude toward a matter of such supreme importance as our national safety, we have been short-sighted, unintelligent, procrastinating, and unbusinesslike. As a people we are insurance-mad. We take out more insurance, and more different kinds of insurance, than do all the European nations put together. We insure our lives, our limbs, our houses, our motor-cars, our live stock, our trunks, our plate-glass windows; we insure against fire, against flood, against cyclones, against earthquakes, against burglars; but we have stubbornly refused to take out a policy against the most terrible of all calamities — war. And yet we insist that we are a business people!

This extraordinary mental attitude is due to several causes: to our geographical isolation (which, with the development of the steamship, the airplane, and the submarine, no longer exists); to our insularity so far as world-politics have been concerned; to our absorption in money-making and money-spending; to the undue importance which we attach to pleasures and comforts; and to the inordinate vanity and conceit which are a logical result of the untruths and half-truths in our school histories. We have been brought up, for example, to believe that we whipped England in two wars. We did — but under what circumstances? Do our school histories mention the fact that during the Revolution we had in the field almost ten times as many men as the British, and that for the deciding victory at Yorktown we have to thank the French? Were you aware that during the War of 1812 we employed, first and last, upward of half a million men against a force of British regulars which never exceeded seventeen thousand? And the only fighting that we have done in the last half-century has been against a small and wretchedly equipped Span-

ish army, some bands of marauding Indians, and a few thousand Filipino tribesmen, many of them armed with bows and arrows. Surely not a record which justifies our national swelled head!

Through the latter half of the Taft Administration, and through the first two years of that of President Wilson, we saw the Mexican situation daily grow more menacing. Did we make any preparations to meet the threatened danger? No, not one! Then, in the midsummer of 1914, there broke over Europe the Great War. Every thinking American realized that if we kept out of it, it would be by a miracle — and the days of miracles are past. Having plastered our shops, our offices, our railway stations with signs which urged, warned, beseeched, "*Safety First!*" it was only to be expected that, with this appalling danger threatening us, we would take prompt and energetic measures to build up an army. Did we? We did not. We were too busy playing politics, golf, and the stock market. So that when the border burst into flame in the spring of 1916, the regular army was not large enough to handle the situa-

tion and it was found necessary to call out the National Guard. The record of that mobilization forms a chapter in our history of which we have no reason to brag. It was an improvement on the miserable affair of 1898, it is true, and the sanitary end of it was handled admirably, but there praise must end. The troop-trains passed through a rich and for the most part thickly settled region; yet in many cases the soldiers on those trains claimed that they did not have proper food or enough of it. Every school-boy is taught that it is hot, sizzling hot, along the Rio Grande in summer — but for weeks after their arrival many regiments sweltered in winter uniforms. The European War had already shown us how vital it is that an army be lavishly supplied with machine guns; yet our entire force on the border did not possess enough machine guns properly to equip a single division according to European standards. Many of the National Guard units were so deficient in their equipment, or their ranks were so far from being filled, that months elapsed before they were permitted to go to the border at all.

Now, this book of Mr. Batchelder's — and it is written, remember, from the viewpoint of the men in the ranks — shows conclusively several things. It shows (1) that to-day war can be waged successfully only by highly trained men; (2) that bi-weekly drills in an armory and a fortnight at a summer camp are not sufficient, that the training for modern warfare requires many months of constant and arduous application; (3) that the various States have not the facilities for giving this intensive training, and that consequently the state organizations, when subjected to the strain of active service, broke down; and (4) that a system of national defense, where the burden of military service falls upon a patriotic few, while thousands of other young men who should share that burden remain comfortably at home, is unjust, unsafe, unpatriotic and un-American.

Now it is no longer a theory with which we are confronted. It is an actuality. We are ourselves in the Great War. It is no Mexican menace this time, it is the real thing. We are at war with Germany, and we had better spell it in capital letters, like this, W–A–R. We have

pitted ourselves against the most efficient war machine the world has ever seen, a machine whose sole purpose is destruction. And the only way that we can hope to smash that machine is by building a better one. To build a machine capable of doing such a task will strain the human and material resources of this country as they have never been strained before. During the construction of that machine, and afterward, the politicians and the theorists must be told, "Hands off!"

War as it is waged to-day is a hard, grim, precise, unsentimental business, — perhaps the most businesslike and highly specialized of all human enterprises, — and there is in it no place for amateurs.

Let us then make good our boast that we are a business people by dropping the sentimental rubbish which many of us have been talking, by adopting a system which will eliminate both slackers and volunteers, and by going at the task of building up an army in a business way.

I am perfectly aware that there are tens of thousands of American parents who view with

JUST TEXAS!

TYPICAL MEXICAN VILLAGE IN TEXAS

unconcealed horror the prospect of their sons becoming soldiers. I hope that those parents will read this book. And after they have read it, I should like an opportunity to ask them which they honestly believe to be best, physically and morally, for their sons: to spend this coming summer playing golf and tennis, loafing about summer hotels or city cafés and pool-rooms, going to baseball games and motion-picture shows, or leading the wholesome, regular, out-of-doors life of the training-camp.

Mr. Batchelder tells us that the people of Texas treated with something akin to contempt the men who wore the khaki of the private soldier. I hope and believe that before we have been many weeks at war the American people will treat with the contempt he deserves every unmarried and able-bodied man of fighting age who does *not* wear either that khaki or a badge which will show that he is serving his country industrially.

Now is your chance, young man, to show the stuff that you are made of. Prove to the world that the old American fighting stock has not run out. Go learn the soldier's job! Let your

college, your office, and your sports take care of themselves while you take care of your country. For she needs you! Don't you hear her bugles call?

E. Alexander Powell.

Washington
April 15, 1917.

Watching and Waiting on the Border

Watching and Waiting on the Border

CHAPTER I

WE SPRING TO ARMS OVERNIGHT

WHO is to blame for the Mexican situation?

In answer to this query, some facetiously point an accusing finger at Adam; others censure Villa; still others reproach the Administration. The other day my history professor remarked, "Cortez, by invading the shores of Mexico, at the same time laid the foundation for the present state of unrest." Now we have just what we want! As his star of political prominence in America has long since faded, he is beyond the influence of censure or reproach. By all means let us blame Cortez.

And so, upon Mr. Cortez I heap contumely for four months of misery in the deserts of

Texas; to him I give thanks for the greatest experience of my life.

To the American of yesterday, the state militia was a joke. It appeared publicly on various occasions, — Memorial Day, Labor Day, and the like, — paraded in more or less disorder, and to a military audience resembled in its entirety an "awkward squad." It drilled at uncertain periods in the armories, became entangled in the intricacies of maneuvers, much to the delight of its audience (a languid newspaper reporter and the loyal sweetheart of one of the men), and upon emergence into public view, its individual members were greeted with snickers, and — "Oh, mother, look at the funny man; is him a boy scout?" Its task was thankless and its lot apparently hopeless.

Now, however, the National Guard has changed. It may be still, as some assert, a joke — but it is a tragic joke. It does not now represent a group of bloodthirsty, hare-brained idiots who drill occasionally and uselessly; it is the accepted reserve army of the United States of America. Political crises have called it to arms once; even now the country demands

its service again. On this account the American people look respectfully to the National Guard for support, some with confidence, others, appreciatively, yet with trepidation in their hearts.

It is with the transition of the National Guard from nonentity to a state of inestimable importance that I have to deal. I detail the results of the influence of Mr. Cortez upon myself, as a typical Guardsman, upon my company, as a typical company, upon my regiment, as a typical regiment.

. . . . . .

"Wilson has called out the militia!"

This was the startling announcement with which a friend greeted me on Sunday evening, June 18, 1916.

The preceding day I had been attending a dance at the Country Club, when I was summoned by a long-distance telephone call to the week-end encampment of my company at a town some twenty miles from Boston. As I had been previously excused, this incident seemed unusual, and I had accepted with some suspicion the explanation that I must sign the

pay-roll. The officer had then dismissed me and allowed me to return to Worcester, ordering me, however, to report on Sunday afternoon at the Cambridge Armory. Sunday I reported, was asked if the emergency address on record was correct, and then was dismissed. It was at eleven o'clock that night, as I was leaving for home, that I first learned of the mobilization of the Guard.

I left my friend and rushed to a telephone. I could not get a response from any newspaper office, so I tried the Associated Press.

"How about this militia order?" I asked.

"Who are you?" came the query.

"My name is Batchelder," I informed him.

"And why do you want to know?" the voice asked again. He was evidently guarding the news closely.

"I am Private Batchelder, Machine-Gun Company, Eighth Regiment. I am slightly interested, as I may have to go myself."

"That's better. Well, here's the order —"

And he read a notice received from Washington, which ordered the immediate mobilization of one brigade and one regiment of

Massachusetts troops, besides several minor organizations.

"I don't know whether the Eighth is going," he announced; "that's all we have now."

I reached my home city at one o'clock and tried one of the newspaper offices. They had just received complete information. Yes, my regiment had been called out, I was told. I went to the local armory to learn the details, if possible. I found the building brilliantly lighted. In the armorer's room, emergency calls were being telephoned to all parts of the city; already, unknown poets were making ready to rush their efforts, born of martial inspiration, to the offices of the morning press. One group of men listened breathlessly to the reminiscences of a Spanish War veteran. I soon left the armory and walked home. I could not realize that I was to be called into active service; it had all happened so suddenly. My hopes of the preceding April, when I enlisted, that I might see service, were about to be realized. I could not understand why, a few minutes before, a veteran of two campaigns had told me gravely that he hoped I would not have to see fighting. I think

I understand now. As I look back upon that June night, I recall no feeling other than delight at the prospect of the great adventure. My mind pictured an army marching triumphantly through the streets of Mexico City, its ranks full, its bright flags waving. How different would have been the reality!

When I reached home I found my father and mother, previously awakened by a telephone call from a newspaper office, walking nervously in the front hall. My father was grave and worried (he had been in Mexico!); mother was trying hard to be brave. I explained the situation to them, and went to my room, intending to get a few hours' sleep. As soon as I found that it was out of the question, I did not go to bed, but wrote a few letters and attempted to straighten out the records of a small business enterprise in which I had been engaged for some time.

When morning came, I started downtown in order to get the news from the papers. I was much amused to find in one of them the following account of my early visit to the newspaper offices:—

We Spring to Arms Overnight

IN TELEGRAM OFFICE AT 1.15 THIS MORNING

ROGER, SON OF F. R. BATCHELDER, IN UNIFORM WITH BUNDLE, ASKS FOR ORDERS

Roger Batchelder, son of F. R. Batchelder, 9 Whitman Road, a member of the Machine-Gun Company of the 8th Regiment, M.N.G., who has just concluded his second year at Harvard, came to the *Telegram* office at 1.15 this morning, fully uniformed and carrying a bundle containing some hastily gathered clothing, to learn when it would be necessary for him to report at Cambridge with his company. Batchelder was in Natick yesterday at an encampment of his company and reached Worcester last night.

Immediately after breakfast, my father drove me to my Armory, where I reported. It was just 6 A.M. A large crowd had gathered outside, gazing curiously at the unusual spectacle and watching intently the uniformed men who passed to and fro. Two guards with bared sabers, evidently greatly impressed with the importance of their new duties, imperiously restrained the over-inquisitive, carefully examined the passes of those who desired to leave the building, and followed to the letter the man-

dates of Jove, — i.e., the Colonel of the Regiment.

Some parents were looking for their sons who had not gone home on the previous night; others were arguing tearfully with harassed officers that "Willie was only sixteen and not of military age," while the youth in question grinned sheepishly, quite gratified at the seeming importance of his position. And as the private, armed with the all-powerful pass, made his way down the walk, he realized, from the deferential passage which the crowd opened for him, that he was no longer to be the object of ridicule because of the tightness of his breeches and the conspicuous breadth of his shoes. Today the soldier was a public idol. Those newspapers which, a week ago, pictured the militiaman as an example of decadent American militarism, now extolled him as a national hero. Small wonder that Private Smith attempts to draw in his chin "so that the axis of the head and neck is vertical," as he emerges from that holy of holies — the Armory.

Inside the Armory, there was a confused bustle of men — officers rushing about; order-

lies, papers in hand, flitting here and there; soldiers carrying loads of supplies; recruits jostling and pushing in their eagerness to enlist.

I made my way with difficulty to the company room in the basement and found that the majority of the men had already arrived. A guard at the door prevented the promiscuous wandering of meddlesome persons. A group of my friends were diligently engaged in a game of whist.

"Well, look who's here," one greeted me; and continued, grinning cheerfully, "Now you're in, you can't get out. Better join us."

There was nothing to do except an occasional turn at guard, so we played for the rest of the day.

At noon, we found to our delight that the cooks had not been idle. Companies were formed in the hall and marched into one of the rooms which had been hastily converted into a kitchen. Canned beans and soup were the articles of diet. For washing the mess-kits, two small pans of lukewarm water had been provided. One can easily imagine the conditions under which those at the end of the line

"washed up," after several hundred men with greasy dishes had preceded them.

In the early evening the problem of sleeping-quarters presented itself. We were not particular, as few had slept on the previous night and all were now ready to make up for it. Many rolled up in their blankets on the cement floor of the locker room. I was more fortunate, as I managed to secure a choice position on the rug under one of the desks in the officers' room. Despite the fact that a crowd of recruits were being examined, I immediately went to sleep, curled around a waste-basket.

By Wednesday the Regiment had filled many of its vacancies with recruits, as volunteers had been pouring into the Armory since the announcement of the mobilization order. My company had nearly the fifty-three enlisted men which constitute a full machine-gun contingent. Several Harvard students, who had left college for their homes in distant States, did not arrive until later. There were some from New York, one from Pennsylvania, and one from Michigan. The equipment of the company, however, was far from complete. For the

four 1908 model, Benet-Mercier, or Hotchkiss, automatic machine rifles, there was little or no ammunition. Mules, necessary for the transportation of the guns and ammunition, had never been procured for us. Our State had been fairly liberal with its quartermaster's and ordnance supplies; each man had side-arms complete and, with some exceptions, complete blanket-rolls. One woolen O. D. uniform, obviously unfit for service in the tropics, one pair of more or less serviceable army shoes, a dilapidated campaign hat, and an excellent overcoat had been issued to each man upon his enlistment.

CHAPTER II

UNDER CANVAS

On Wednesday morning, orders arrived to entrain at once for Framingham, the state mobilization camp. Blanket-rolls were made up, and the entire morning was spent in loading equipment on motor-trucks. At eleven-thirty the regiment left the Armory, marched across the bridge, and began its parade through Boston. The remainder of the march, as I look back upon it, is a jumble of crowds of people, flying banners, and continuous cheering. To the citizens of Boston, the men appeared to be the best of soldiers, despite the occasionally uneven ranks and the sad appearance of many of the uniforms and most of the equipment. But a man well versed in military affairs has since told me that the very idea of those men, only partially trained, and with faulty and incomplete equipment, leaving their desks and offices for warfare under the worst possible conditions, was indeed pathetic.

The railway station held one of the greatest

crowds in its history. All the people not in arms carried packages and boxes for their soldier friends and relatives. As I went through the station, a young lady of my acquaintance handed me a box of cigars. Before I could thank her, we were surrounded by a dense throng. A large force of police was at hand to minimize the almost inevitable disorder. The troops marched through the gates, which were closed after them. A rush was made by the crowd, the gates opened, and before the guards could prevent it, a large number had gained admittance to the enclosure. Few could find their friends on account of the confusion. Bundles and letters were given with implicit trust to entire strangers.

"Will you please give this crucifix to my boy in A Company?" I heard an old mother ask one of the men tearfully. "The Father blessed it this morning, but I can't find my boy anywhere."

"Could you take this to Bill, please?" requested another, a young girl, blushing slightly. "I forget which company he's in. Yes, the Eighth Regiment. It's fudge. Be sure, as Bill

always did like my fudge. No, not a private; he's a sergeant," she added with a touch of pride. "Oh, yes! He'll know whom it's from, all right. And tell him I'll be out to see him if I can get away from work to-morrow."

There were many such scenes, some humorous, the majority pathetic. Mothers were searching frantically for lost sons; young wives, carrying tiny infants, were clinging to their husbands, who were smiling bravely. The scene recalled to my mind the departure of the Fourth Black Watch from Dundée, Scotland, for France, which I had witnessed two years previously — this farewell was an exact replica of that event which I, now a participant, had then viewed as a spectator.

Before long the train pulled out; the bands in the station could be heard above the roar of the people. Boston, formerly so indifferent to her citizen-soldiers, had at last demonstrated, by her real and impressive farewell, the awakening of her patriotic enthusiasm.

As we had eaten nothing since early morning, rations, consisting of hard-boiled eggs and sandwiches, were distributed. A train boy, sell-

OFF FOR TOWN

WASHING UP AFTER MESS

ing chocolate and other edibles, found, after going through one car, that his stock was exhausted. He stood dazedly on the platform, counting the money which would ordinarily represent several days' earnings.

"Wow!" he exclaimed; "you soldiers sure have some appetites. Don't they ever feed you anything?"

We detrained at Framingham at four o'clock and marched to the huge muster-field, a mile distant. We found the Second Regiment, from the western part of the State, already encamped in one corner of the plain.

First the Ninth took its position in the center, nearest to the road, then the Eighth, followed by the Fifth. The three regiments were formed on one long street, extending from one end of the field to the other. The company streets were laid out perpendicularly to it.

No sooner were the pup-tents pitched than a heavy rain began to fall. It was at once decided to raise the larger and more comfortable pyramidals. After considerable difficulty and much confusion, this was accomplished. About twenty men were placed in each of them, al-

though the regulation number is eight. On the farther side of the regimental street, the cook-tent and officers' quarters were set up. Drains were dug, firewood was gathered, and by seven o'clock the camp was nominally complete.

The first night was not a pleasant experience. There were no cots (how we envied the company in the next street!); every one rolled up in his blanket and tried to sleep. The grass was wet; so were the majority of the men. We lay awake for a while, talking over the situation, discussing the probabilities of our early departure. One man broke out with "Sweet Cider Time When You Were Mine," but was quickly discouraged by an unfeeling guard.

"Say, boys, you ought to see my girl," exclaimed one suddenly; "nice blonde hair, blue eyes —"

"No blondes for me," volunteered another. "Give me the —"

"You fellows will have to quit talking or there'll be trouble," said a sergeant, who had heard the beginning of the debate.

"Gee! I'll be glad to get to Texas. You won't freeze there," murmured a rebel.

COMPANY STREET AT FRAMINGHAM

REGIMENTAL STREET AND COOK-SHACKS AT FRAMINGHAM

Soon there came deep snores from every part of the camp. Within an hour we were all asleep.

First call came at 5.45 A.M., followed by reveille at 6. In spite of the complete change of hours from those of the ordinary lives of the men, little solicitation was required to entice them from their uncomfortable sleeping-quarters. In five minutes every one was rushing around the company street, slapping his arms in a vain endeavor to keep warm.

That morning and those following were spent in machine-gun drill. Squads were taken to various parts of the field and instructed in the nomenclature, dismounting, and setting-up of the gun. Of these essential exercises, the majority of us knew little or nothing.

These little drills are a welcome relief from the usual infantry formations which we have hitherto practiced. We are allowed to lie down on the grass in one corner of the field while a harassed sergeant, seated beside the gun, strives to explain its principles. After a hasty glance at the "Machine-Gun Regulations," he extracts part from part, until the gun, to the

eye of the uninitiated, resembles the scattered results of an automobile accident.

"This" — pointing impressively to a long cylindrical object — "is the actuator. Its functions are —"

"Here we have the breech-block, into which the firing-pin is inserted. Understand? — breech-block — firing-pin."

And so on, through a bewildering maze of explanations.

"Now for volunteers to put the gun together."

After fifteen minutes, the man who offered his services announces that he has finished.

"How about those two small parts?" asks the sergeant.

"Oh! Those must have been left over. Probably don't need 'em," with a grin.

Soon the sergeant demands, "Is there any one who does n't understand about the gun?"

All look dubiously around, but no one answers.

"We shall have a little drill on the — er, nomenclature. What is this?" — holding up a tiny spring. "Private Collins."

The victim regards the offending piece blankly and finally answers, uncertainly: —

"Escalator."

"Escalator! We were not discussing subway construction." This with superb sarcasm. "Possibly you refer to the actuator. And this is the actuator." He holds the piece aloft. "You should have listened to my explanation. I don't want this to happen again."

The sergeant exhibits another piece of gun hardware.

"Private Palmer, you may tell us what this is."

No answer. Private Palmer is eventually discovered, chatting delightedly through the fence with two young ladies from town.

"Private Palmer!" in a loud voice. "You might explain to your friends that the afternoon is reserved for calls. And tell Brown to postpone his ice-cream purchases." Brown is industriously holding parley with a local merchant, also through the fence.

"Now," continues the sergeant hopelessly, "can *any one* tell me what this is? It is the sear-spring. Its duties are — Well, there's

the recall. Squad! 'Ten — shun — forward — hirch."

Our morning drill is over.

During the afternoons and evenings visitors were allowed access to the grounds. They came, thousands of them, on foot, by trolley, and by auto. It was estimated that nearly a hundred thousand people visited the camp daily. Inside the grounds the streets were choked with civilians, looking for friends, always alert for novel incidents, prying into tents, cook-shacks, wandering unconcernedly along that sanctum — Officers' Row — and "rubbering" at anything and everything. With them came a horde of venders of small merchandise. Those armed with cameras took "a dandy picture in a frame for only one dime," and reaped a harvest of silver pieces. Many sold candy, cigarettes, and tobacco; some, more alive to the situation, offered maps of Mexico, "with complete history of the Greasers, for ten cents." With the surging mass of people wandering aimlessly about, and the crowds of hawkers, the camp greatly resembled a fair-ground. Outside the camp, a steady stream of electric cars, packed to the

roof, crept along with gongs clanging. Automobiles were parked in thousands within the grounds; an endless procession continued passing the camp throughout the day. Many people were loaded with gifts for their relatives and friends — cake and every other variety of indigestible, magazines, tobacco, cigarettes, numberless woolen socks, and special clothing designed "for border service." Why should one mind if the mess is not quite up to standard when the third squad is entertaining at nine o'clock with roast chicken and no less than ten varieties of home-made cake?

At four-thirty came parade, reviewed by the regimental and brigade officers. Retreat at seven was the impressive ceremony of the day. The companies stood lined up "at attention" in their streets; as the sound of the "Star-Spangled Banner" came gently from the farther end of the field, one could see the flag dropping slowly and evenly from the top of the pole. During the evening groups gathered and sang "Tenting To-night" and other old tunes, for the edification of the spectators. Some companies gave impromptu vaudeville shows, fol-

lowed their efforts with exhortations for fudge and cake, and promised, if thus rewarded, to entertain again to-morrow.

It was quite evident from the mobilization that truly "War is the leveler of all ranks." Practically every profession was represented in the gathering. Of lawyers and doctors there were scores. Men, who a week ago had been giving orders to others, now received them from those others, by virtue of the latter's higher military rank. Officers, working for a small salary in civil life, now controlled the daily lives of millionaires. He who previously rode in his limousine was drilled and ordered about by a former taxi-driver. Cooks and chefs from restaurants and cafés now exercised their art for the benefit of their comrades. Social and business caste gave way before military rank.

Saturday was "Governor's Day" at Framingham. In his official capacity of commander-in-chief of the Massachusetts troops, Governor McCall reviewed his men at the parade. Then, visiting each regiment, he made a short but impressive address, urging them to live up to the traditions of their past records, and commend-

ing them in the name of the Commonwealth which he represented.

That night, shortly after midnight, my company was awakened and marched, in various stages of undress, to the tent occupied by the Medical Corps, for a so-called physical examination. Many who were slightly under the federal requirements were rather dubious as to the result. Although I was a few pounds under weight, I soon became assured that I would not be rejected. Several officers, seated in a maze of papers and documents, were conducting the examinations.

As the man in front of me entered the tent, I heard the question:—

"Are you all right?"

"Yes," was the answer.

"Passed," the officer said to the clerk.

I entered the tent.

"Name?"

"Batchelder, R."

He looked me over appraisingly.

"How much do you weigh?"

"One thirty-five," I answered glibly.

"Feeling pretty well?"

"Fine."

"O.K.," he nodded; and I realized that my examination was over.

Church services were held the next morning in a drenching rain. Chaplain H. Boyd Edwards, whom we quickly recognized as a true friend and a "man's man," had charge of the Protestant services. The Catholics marched to the Ninth, where mass was held.

Upon the termination of the services, the mustering of the state troops into the federal service took place. The oath which we were to sign was as follows: —

I do hereby acknowledge to have voluntarily enlisted this 25th day of June, 1916, as a soldier in the National Guard of the United States and of the State of Massachusetts, for the period of three years in the service and three years in the reserve, under the conditions prescribed by law unless sooner discharged by proper authority. And I do solemnly swear that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America and to the State of Massachusetts, and that I will serve them honestly and faithfully against all enemies whomsoever and that I will obey the orders of the President of the United States and the Governor of Massachusetts, and of the officers appointed

over me according to law and the rules and articles of war. This oath is subscribed to with the understanding that credit will be given in the execution of this contract for the period that I have already served under my current enlistment in the Organized Militia of the State of Massachusetts. So Help Me God.

Some who had enlisted for state service only did not care to entrust themselves to the mercies of the Federal Government, and refused to take the oath. These "slackers," as they were called, were lined up on one side, with the remainder of the company on the other. It was a very impressive ceremony. As the drizzling rain fell upon us, the Captain read the oath, while we raised our right hands. Then we signed the papers and were duly sworn into the service of the United States.

It happened that my parents had driven to Framingham that morning and arrived just in time to see me "take the oath." As I caught a glimpse of their grave and anxious faces, I realized that the ceremony in which I had just participated was to them the most serious moment in all the years of watchful solicitude with which they had surrounded me.

"Break ranks," came the command.

We were "federalized."

During our stay at the muster-field, there were many rumors concerning our future movements. All were in fine spirits and eager to be off to "lick the Greasers." The newspapers printed conflicting reports that left every one in a haze of uncertainty.

"I hear that we are to be kept here for six weeks," one would venture.

"No chance at all. Why, in '98 —"

And there started an argument which left matters more confused than before.

"A week's pay says that we leave before ten days."

"Taken," assented a pessimist; "that is, provided we get any pay."

"Five dollars that we are back within a year."

"Also covered," said a sergeant, producing a roll of bills.

And so it went. One man's guess was as good as another's.

However, on the morning of June 26, it was officially announced that we would leave for the

South that afternoon. All were greatly excited and filled with anticipation, for the stay in camp was getting to be monotonous. In the morning I obtained a few hours' leave and went home with my father. I visited the dentist, paid a few hurried calls, and returned to camp at two with the family, who wanted to be with me until the last moment. When I arrived, I found that the tents were struck and everything packed. I rolled my pack, but found that the rope I had used for lack of a roll-strap had disappeared. I applied to the quartermaster for a strap, but, as I expected, he had none; neither could he furnish a rope. Finally I procured a piece of wire which served the purpose. Then I packed my haversack, which was overflowing with gifts I had received. A mirror, a towel, an army knife, which later did fine service, a fountain-pen, and a box of a hundred good cigars, thoughtfully provided by my father, were added to my regulation outfit. At three the companies fell in with full equipment, marched to the parade-ground, and formed in regiments. At four, one regiment moved out with colors flying — the envy of all the rest. When six

o'clock came without orders, each soldier was given a portion of canned beef and a few pieces of hard-tack. My father, however, sent into town for sandwiches and fruit, so together with some of my friends, we enjoyed a more substantial meal. The evening passed slowly and at ten, as there seemed to be no prospect of my departure and they had twenty miles to drive, my family left for home. Soon we were told that we might fall out and sleep. An enormous bonfire was built; around this, the men rolled up in their blankets and ponchos — the overcoats had been packed. Some attempts at singing were made, but they were not successful; every one was dead-tired and too sober to sing, as he realized that this was his last night in Massachusetts for some time to come.

CHAPTER III

OFF AT LAST FOR THE BORDER

At five the next morning we marched to the station and entrained promptly. It was the 27th of June — a beautiful day. We were in the best of spirits despite the long night's wait.

The train was made up of ten passenger-coaches, one baggage-car, several flat-cars, and a Pullman for the officers. Our company was installed in a decadent Boston and Albany coach which, as one expressed it aptly, "should have been retired from service long ago on a pension." Two seats were allotted to each two men; blanket-rolls and side-arms were precariously placed in the racks overhead. At noon we filed by companies to the baggage-car, where a "cook-shack" had been improvised. A stove was placed on a sand foundation, several inches above the floor, with its pipe extending through the side door. In spite of the precaution taken, the floor of the car occasionally caught fire, as a rule just before mess-time. The expletives of the cooks were then a delight to hear; they

almost preferred letting the car burn up to putting out the fire in the stove. At first the inside of the car was a hopeless jumble of pots, pans, and wooden cases. The food, though scarcely up to the standard of Boston cafés, was at least edible. Coffee, either "canned Willie" (canned beef), beans, or "slum" (stew), and hard-tack formed the usual menu.

Guards, in twenty-four-hour shifts, were placed at the doors of each car, to prevent unnecessary wandering. No man was allowed to pass from one car to another without a permit.

Our train proceeded with great leisureliness to Providence, then went north and passed the Massachusetts-New York boundary. At ten o'clock lights were put out, with the exception of one at either end of the car. The cushions in the seats were placed lengthwise to bridge the gap ordinarily between them. Upon these the men attempted to rest. However comfortably one might curl up, the next curve was sure to upset his equilibrial calculations. Bang! he would go into the man beside him who was heroically sleeping with one foot out of the window. Or he might slide gently through the gap

at the end of the cushions and become hopelessly entangled with foot-rests, iron fixtures, and the box of cigars which some one had secreted there. Perhaps the unevenness of the seat caused a certain tilt in the cushion. This condition called for inordinate skill in the art of balancing, lest the sleeper be launched precipitously into the aisle. And mess-kits and cups had the awkward habit of bouncing off the racks above, and down upon the head of the innocent sleeper.

I was on guard the first night and found it rather lonesome. All the men slept, if only fitfully. The odd postures of some of the men and the unharmonious snores amused me for a little while, until the thought came that we were booked to sleep in just such a way for over a week. That was not so very funny! I took my pipe and went to the platform. It was midnight. We passed over the Hudson River at Poughkeepsie and proceeded at a good clip across the State. Soon I went inside, wrote a few letters home, and after arousing the indignant relief, turned in for the night.

When we awoke the next morning, we were in

a beautiful valley. The country had changed overnight. Beneath us was the river, winding along the plain through the chain of hills. Here and there were tiny villages; the white farms with their well-tilled fields looked prosperous and contented.

I was placed on kitchen detail for the day. Kitchen police is the duty which every soldier dreads, although it has its compensations. It represents Work with a capital W, and non-union hours. The man thus honored is subject to the dictates of the cook. He cleans all the pans, pares potatoes, and performs every conceivable variety of domestic drudgery. If the meal is poor, he is blamed for letting the fire go out; if it is good, the cook receives the honors. In other words, he is distinctly the "goat." However, a few cigars and an occasional bottle of beer will do wonders with even the most flinty-hearted of cooks. If the police "stands in," he may taste freely of the pudding, or even fry an egg, or make a little lemonade. He is also exempt from military duties.

The train came to Norwich, New York, at ten o'clock. The companies were ordered from

the train and marched through the town. In the main street, much to the gratification of the open-mouthed inhabitants, they went through those contortions known officially as "calisthenics." I was excused by the cook (who was enjoying one of my cigars), so I made a foraging party to the village. A few tomatoes, some lettuce, and canned peaches — I had a dinner fit for the gods.

The young ladies of the town were at the station *en masse*. Each one was well supplied with slips of paper on which she had written her name and address. These were passed promiscuously through the car windows to the more romantic members of the company, with requests for post-cards and "war souvenirs." The boys returned the favor, with unblushing demands for fudge and tobacco. At nearly every small town along the route, this mutual exchange took place. Of the results, we shall hear later.

During the course of the afternoon, as I was very tired, I sat down on a crate in the cook-shack and promptly went to sleep. Suddenly my dreams were rudely disturbed by an incom-

parable volley of profanity. I looked up and saw a mess-sergeant standing over me.

"What's the row?" I asked drowsily.

"WHAT'S THE ROW!! Look!" He pointed to my elbow.

To my chagrin I found that the offending member was resting in a pan of beans which had been prepared for supper.

"Say," he continued violently, "you get to hellouter here and don't come back until five. What do you think this is, anyway, — a bedroom?"

I lost no time in complying with his request.

Soon after our departure the versatility of many of the boys began to assert itself. The popularity of the fad for hair-clipping resulted in a great demand for barbers. Several men boldly announced their efficiency in that field and were kept busy for a time. That they obtained results no one could deny, but their artistry was decidedly of a futurist type. After an hour or two the united physical efforts of several men (who had previously undergone the operation) were necessary to tempt another victim to a like submission. The effects of this

vogue were startling; those who had formerly been blessed with long, wavy hair now looked like convicts. Some went so far as to have their heads shaved with a razor. One man in particular was so noted for his shiny head that the chance expression, "How I love the Doctor's dome!" became almost a tradition in our company. To add to their already grotesque appearance, quite a number fondly encouraged "war mustaches." Some were very successful in their efforts; others sought in vain the desired results. After the first month in Texas, I had a facial adornment with which I was delighted. One day, however, a group of men whom I knew to be friends pleaded so earnestly and almost tearfully for its removal that I reluctantly complied with their wishes.

Card-games of every description flourished from morning till night. They were broken up for only one hour in the morning, which was devoted to "theoretical machine-gun work." This duty embraced the dismounting of the gun and a subsequent search for the parts which a sudden lurch of the car had scattered over the floor.

We passed through Buffalo Wednesday night

and arrived at Cleveland on the following morning. At Bellevue, Ohio, we were met at the station by a small boy who offered a dog for sale. After considerable bartering, I bought the unfortunate puppy for three dollars. He was a sad-looking little dog of doubtful ancestry. The company at once made him mascot and christened him "Benny," in honor of the machine gun. Poor Benny did not enjoy the trip. He crawled under a seat; as we came into the warmer regions, he howled continually in melancholy tones. When, shortly after our arrival at El Paso, his discomfort became so obvious and his nocturnal moans so disturbing, the company voted that he be transferred. He was accordingly presented, collar and all, to a cook in the Twenty-third Infantry, where, we trust, he now enjoys a more peaceful existence.

On Friday morning, the fourth day out, we stopped at a small station in Missouri. Some one discovered a small pond about a quarter of a mile from the train. As there had been no opportunities for bathing, permission for a swim was asked of the officers. When this was granted, every man rushed to the water. We

found that a dozen pigs had discovered the delights of the place before us, so, much to their disgust, we chased them away from their rightful watering-place. Then we waded knee-deep in the mud, and for nearly an hour reveled in the dirty water. The possessors of the "soap that floats" were indeed fortunate, as quantities of the other varieties slipped from the hands of the bathers and disappeared in the mud. I can truthfully say that that was one of the most enjoyable swims of my life.

In the afternoon, we came to Mexico, Missouri, where we detrained and marched through the town. It was at this point that the heat first troubled us; the thermometer registered 100 degrees at four o'clock. We also saw our first Mexicans, for, true to its name, the town had many inhabitants of that nationality. We learned that, on account of trouble with them, restrictions had been placed on the sale of firearms; the local militia was patrolling the streets with loaded rifles. At the station the usual bevy of young ladies greeted us. They were high-school girls and entertained us with their songs and cheers. The Harvard men in the

company replied gracefully with a "regular Harvard" for Mexico — Missouri, and several football songs.

At every station the crowds inspected the exteriors of the cars closely. On each car was written the name of the company whose traveling home it was. This was written in huge letters of chalk. Besides that information, many minor inscriptions and pictures appeared. "Get Villa"; "We're after Villa"; "To Hell with Mexico"; and "The only good Mexican is a dead one," were the favorite mottoes. Some men of artistic ability drew pretentious pictures of flags, battle-scenes, and villainous-looking Mexicans.

At this point let me correct the illusions that many people cherish (as I did until experience taught me otherwise), that troop-trains, when they halt at towns *en route*, are overwhelmed with delicacies of every kind and other grateful tokens of the sympathy and approval of the inhabitants. There was always plenty of food at the stations — at a price, and a high one at that. One gentleman presented us with stamped local post-cards to send home, and frequently

tobacco advertisers gave us "free samples," but at no time on the trip did we receive the proverbial "wine and roses." Nor did we encounter the young lady who kissed some nine hundred militiamen in two hours. Although the demonstrations were many and the flag-waving vigorous, more material bounties were lacking. Possibly others were more fortunate than we in this respect. I sincerely hope so.

At three o'clock the next morning we were awakened at Kansas City, Missouri, and ordered to change cars. We found the tourist-cars of the Santa Fé awaiting us. These were a great improvement over the New England derelicts in which we had traveled. At Newton, Kansas, we found ourselves beside a troop-train of cavalry. They were evidently enjoying the best of fare, as they most generously filled our mess-kits with much-desired canned peaches.

That day we were again given an opportunity to swim — this time at Dodge City. The Arkansas River, of grammar-school geography fame, proved to be quite a disappointment in size, as it was only some twenty-five feet wide at this point. Nevertheless, it was much bet-

ter than the Missouri mud-hole as a bathing-place.

On Sunday we passed through Colorado and entered New Mexico. The lack of water was now a source of discomfort. Not only was there no water for bathing purposes, but there was very little to drink. As the precious liquid could be obtained only at infrequent tanks along the road, severe restrictions were placed upon its use. One pail of greasy water must suffice for cleaning some fifty mess-kits.

The country seemed all very new and wonderful to us. For miles we could see a sandy waste, destitute of trees, with only an occasional clump of mesquite bushes to break the monotony of the brown waste. Now, farther away, there was a purplish ridge, which, as we approached it, lost all its grandeur and became a mere elevation of the same character as the lower land. Again our route took us along a river-bed, deeply cut by the torrents of spring, but now a bare gully through which a stream of water, a foot wide and a few inches deep, flowed languidly. As noon approached, the land reflected the fierceness of the burning sun and

made the country seem even more desolate and unpleasant than before. Occasionally we passed a small village. These villages seemed not altogether unfamiliar to the boys, as they had seen exact prototypes of them time and again in the "movie" theaters of Boston. A number of houses, built without regard for order, were clustered within a few hundred yards of the railroad. A bank, a general store, several barrooms, a railroad station converted from a freight-car, eight or ten houses, and the village was complete. As the train passed, a few horsemen stopped and watched it with a show of languid interest; a Mexican or two favored us with a none too benevolent glance.

Again we would see a cluster of adobe houses, the inhabitants of which were Mexicans. Some of the more fortunate had procured a freight-car, which they had transformed into a home. Apertures on either side served as windows; through the roof a stove-pipe emerged drunkenly. On the rickety steps six or seven brown children, unmindful of the hot sun, were disporting themselves and tumbling around in the most approved Mexican fashion. As the train

stopped for water at a huge tank close by, the lady of the house, a fat, dirty-looking Mexican, appeared at the door, and shooed them into the house. Then the father appeared, dressed in corduroy pants and gray woolen shirt, — the very picture of Señor Villa he seemed to us, — and lazily took up his position in front of the car. The train started and the children were allowed to emerge once more. Such receptions, peculiar as they seemed to us, proved to be the regular thing in the Southwest. The appearance of soldiers is ever the signal for hiding the children, shutting up the poultry, and taking in the doormat.

We stopped at Raton, New Mexico, for an hour in the morning of July 1. At this place we first made the acquaintance of the silver dollar cart-wheel. These are universally used in the Southwest; gold coin takes the place of bank-notes. One of the boys was quite indignant when a local merchant refused to change an Eastern bank-note.

At Las Vegas we were allowed to leave the train and eat at the station hotel; needless to say, the opportunity was improved by all of us.

TYPHOID INOCULATION

Off at Last for the Border

In the late afternoon we stopped for two hours at Albuquerque and had our first chance to talk with the natives of the Southwest. They spoke ominously of the country below the Rio Grande and loyally asserted that New Mexico was a paradise in comparison to Texas. They regarded us with a more or less indifferent curiosity. Soldiers were nothing new to them; Mexican troubles were every-day affairs, and again, why should they trouble themselves? They were several hundred miles from the border. Apparently they failed to appreciate the fact that it was on account of their own indifference, on account of the failure of their own State to furnish sufficient protection for its citizens, that we, whose only interest in them was that they were Americans, had been called from our homes and occupations to aid them. Nowhere was there the slightest evidence of sympathy or encouragement; every one expressed in a broad grin his opinion of our "hard luck."

At eight o'clock we started on the last stretch of our journey. There were many sore arms in the company, as vaccinations for smallpox and typhoid inoculations had been administered by

the Medical Corps at various times during the trip. Every one was filled with anticipation of the morrow when we should reach our destination in "God's country"; although, by this time, thanks to the descriptions of the people of New Mexico, it had come to be regarded by us as a "No Man's Land."

The next morning we were awakened at five o'clock. I shall never forget my first sight of Texas. It was the hour of dawn; we were rolling along beside a wide river — the Rio Grande. On the left extended a level stretch of country, beyond which the hazy blue outlines of a chain of mountains contrasted deeply with the fast lightening sky. On the right we could see the river, with the dull, regular surface of the plain beyond. Suddenly, the sun rose above the hilltops, flooding the valley with a stream of light, and revealing a similar mountain chain beyond the river.

"What is that?" asked one, pointing to the peaks which had been lighted up.

"Mexico," was the answer.

For a few moments we all gazed silently, greatly impressed by our first sight of the new

land which we had come to "pacify," if not to conquer.

Then the tall buildings of El Paso came into view and beyond the Rio Grande, the little city of Juarez, its white walls and monuments gleaming in the morning sun. The train rolled along through El Paso, passed the famous International Bridge, and soon stopped at our destination. We had reached Camp Cotton. Our long journey was over.

CHAPTER IV

THE CITY OF TENTS

A LEVEL stretch of desert, absolutely free from smaller vegetation, with scarce a dozen trees growing upon it, extended along a dusty road for half a mile. The burning sun beat down upon the waste and an occasional breath of scorching wind raised the dust and sand, scattering it in stifling clouds along the plain. At the lower end of this Garden of Allah were pitched a few tents, while scattered groups of men, clad in the uniform of the militia, covered with dust and perspiration, hurried about them, carrying huge bundles of equipment, pounding on tent-pins, and raising the bulky pyramidal tents. On three sides blue mountains, several miles away, broke the monotony of the level tract. The buildings and spires of El Paso appeared on the northern sky-line. A thick fringe of bushes and small trees, a half-mile in the opposite direction, dotted with occasional tents, marked the outpost on the boundary between the United States and Mexico. Such was

CORRAL

REGIMENTAL STREET AT CAMP COTTON

our first impression of Camp Cotton, as we left the train.

An attempt at organization was at once made. Details were formed; some to unload the train; others to drive pins and to set up the tents; still others to dig drains and perform the duties necessary for the proper pitching of a new camp. In the absence of mallets, iron crowbars were used for driving the pins. During the first half-hour, while trying to erect the cook-tent, I received a blow on the wrist from one of these tools which disabled me for the day. As other companies progressed in their labor, the plain gradually assumed a less desolate aspect. Long rows of tents, set up in streets, appeared; the officers' tents were lined along the road, with the cook-tents in the rear; then the wide regimental street, with the company streets running perpendicularly toward it. Above us was the Fifth Massachusetts, while the Ninth was situated below us.

The long, hot day seemed endless; the few minutes of rest, taken under the doubtful shade of the sweltering tents, were heartlessly interrupted by demands for more details — more

men for work. At about five in the afternoon the heat decreased as the sun sank behind the mountains. Mess, of the eternal "tack and Willie" (hard-tack and canned beef), was at six. Soon the air became delightfully cool; the stars and moon brightened the clear sky; the outline of the mountains could be seen, looming peacefully in the distance. Long before taps the men were curled up in their blankets on the sand. Our first day in Texas was over.

At this point let me explain the three most important words in the military vocabulary: "details," "police," and "regulation." Of these, the first is probably, from the soldier's point of view, the most unpleasant ever invented. Its mere mention will cause a man to simulate sleep, to hide under the cot, to rush under the protecting wing of the canteen, or to tear madly to the other end of the camp. It signifies work outside the ordinary camp routine. If a new drain must be dug, if ice must be carried to the kitchen, if the officers want a bottle of beer, if a load of cinders must be spread — in short, if any mental or physical labor is required, a "detail" is called for. The non-com-

missioned officer, to whom the demand is made by the "top" (first) sergeant, at once levies the required number from the company; if he is on good terms with his own squad, he wins their sincere approval by going to the next. The victims thus selected perform the necessary labor under the watchful eye of the non-com. Some details require only a few minutes of effort; others a half-day.

There were at first three varieties of details; after a month there were but two. They consisted of voluntary, ordinary, and extra. Sometimes a non-com would call for volunteers for such work. In that case conscription was unnecessary. Those belonging to the second category were formed in the usual manner, according to the likes or dislikes of the man in charge. Extra detail, or extra duty, is a punishment. If Private Brown speaks unkindly to his corporal, appears a few minutes late at reveille, is unsatisfactory at inspection, or commits any of the thousand and one petty military misdemeanors, he is reported to the "top," who at once records his name in a little book. The next time a detail is necessary, Private Brown is at once called,

and with others in the same predicament, ordered to report for duty. I need hardly say that after a week or two voluntary details were unknown.

To every civilian the word "police" immediately conveys the idea of a stout guardian of the law, blue-coated and brass-buttoned. In the army its connotation is entirely different. Taken as a verb, it signifies the cleaning-up of the camp, the tent, or the kitchen. The act of policing the company street consists of forming the privates of the company in a line, a distance of a few feet between each. At a given signal a most thorough search is made for waste-paper, cigarette-butts, burnt matches, or any other refuse. Such waste is picked up and deposited in the incinerator. The same applies to the policing of the tent, which is usually done by the most unruly member of the squad.

"Police" as applied to individuals is restricted to two duties: tent-police, of which I have spoken, and kitchen-police. The latter is paradoxically called the worst and the best of camp duties. The kitchen-police (there are usually two from each company) arise with the

cooks an hour in advance of the rest of the company. They at once begin to fetch the water, build fires in the stove and incinerator, and help prepare the morning mess. When the men file past for mess the police serves the food. This over, he washes all the pans and kitchen utensils, pares potatoes and other vegetables for dinner, and does any other work which the cook may dictate. The afternoon is spent in like manner; his work is usually finished by eight o'clock. In addition to performing these duties he is the object of that extraordinary volley of profanity and abuse of which only an army cook is capable.

Nevertheless the joys of "K.P." are not to be underrated. He is in an excellent position to assure himself of "seconds" and plenty of them. He has free access to the apples, the bananas, the eggs, and the meat-refrigerator. What matters it if he cook a small steak or enjoy a delicate breakfast of fried eggs? If he is "in right" with the cook, these and many other delicacies are his for the taking. And above all, he is exempt from further duty for that day. No longer can he be summoned for details; he need

not stand inspection or drill. Although the position of kitchen-police was never sought, it was always accepted with a resigned and peaceful complacency.

"Regulation" signifies that the United States Government has put the sign of approval on the article to which the term is applied. Everything which the soldier uses or wears must be "regulation." The stoves in the cook-shacks bear that stamp. The gun must be carried at the "regulation" angle; incinerators and drains must be constructed according to "regulation." From reveille to taps, the soldier's every move is governed by rules set forth in the "U.S. Army Regulations."

From the very first the utmost care was taken to assure perfect sanitation. Drains were dug under the supervision of the Medical Corps. Incinerators of perfect construction burned all refuse from the kitchens. The camp was systematically policed every morning. At first, the cook-shack was composed of two tents; under one were stored the various food commodities; the stove was placed under the front tent. A long bench in front served as "sideboard" for

the pans, from which mess was served as the company filed past.

During the first part of July the food was of extremely poor quality. There was evidently some trouble about drawing the rations and there was certainly much trouble in cooking them. Beans were the chief article of diet. They were sometimes nearly raw; again they were burned. Many other important matters were, like the cooking, exceedingly unsatisfactory. These troubles were not at all the fault of the men or officers of the militia. In the past they had done faithfully that work in the armories which supposedly fitted them for service in actual warfare. And even now, when conditions were better than they would have been in the field, in a real campaign, we ran against obstacles at every turn, not caused by a lack of conscientiousness or honest endeavor on our part, but the direct result of the lack of foresight of many well-meaning citizens, who have maintained that "we can raise overnight an army that can whip the earth." Untried by hardship or privation, this small body of a hundred thousand men, from various States, were

those upon whom the country relied to withstand the invasion of a power, or, if need be, themselves to conduct an invasion in foreign country.

Many of the boys, on account of the rarefied atmosphere (El Paso is some five thousand feet above the sea-level), suffered from nose-bleed and cracked lips. The former came without a moment's warning — a sudden rush of blood followed by a half-hour of misery. Such hemorrhages often troubled the same man several times a day. Immediately after the attacks there was an exhilarating sensation, no doubt due to relief from the high pressure. After a time this wore off and the man seemed drowsy and somewhat weakened by the loss of blood. The sore lips were the greatest discomfort, however. They would crack and, upon being exposed to the sun, become indescribably dry and parched. If they were moistened by the tongue, a thick layer of stinging alkaline dust formed immediately, adding greatly to the discomfort of the sufferer.

We had not been in Texas long before we became acquainted with the horrors of wind- and

sand-storms, and that mysterious protégé of the two — the "sand-devil." Unprepared as we were for such unknown calamities, we were sadly devastated upon their initial visits. For what is one to do when a sudden gust of wind, launching itself violently from a peaceful atmosphere, swoops down upon the camp, uproots tents, and carries away all articles which are not properly anchored — and continues its destruction for half an hour? A sudden dash is made for the clothing which, a moment ago, hung peacefully on the line outside the tent. The tent-ropes are tightened; the gale seems to have exhausted itself. We breathe more freely. But no; here comes another! The tents flap wildly, the wind sweeps along through the plain; the second blast is followed by another and another, until a steady gale, seeming, to our eyes, to be a hurricane, blows steadily and disastrously. And now comes the sand. The men run for their tents in ignominious retreat, spitting profanely, rubbing their eyes, shaking their dusty heads. The flaps of the tent are let down; each fitful gust, however, opens a space at the bottom and makes entrance for a cloud

of fine alkaline particles, which float like sunbeams for a while, and finally settle upon us. At last the storm is over. We take our clothing (such as still remains to us) and shake from it a thick brown layer of dirt. The cots are swept off, and after some labor we have again acquired our usual state of doubtful comfort.

"Look! hey; come here quick," comes the cry from the street.

We rush out, now prepared for almost any phenomenon. We look down the regimental street and see a column of dust, about two feet in diameter, swirling rapidly upward to a height of several hundred feet. At various degrees of ascendancy, the booty which the aerial whirlpool has collected can be seen, tossing in mad confusion. Papers, handkerchiefs, innumerable small articles of clothing are rapidly disappearing toward the heavens. A man dashes out of a tent, clad in underwear, and shrieks in despairing tones: "Stop it, for God's sake, stop it! — There goes my only pair of pants!" And as he ventures too near the funnel and receives a mouthful of dust, "Oh, damn that sand-devil! What a country!"

We have received another baptism. Sadly and hopelessly we consider means by which we may guard against similar visitations in future.

The requisitions of army clothing did not arrive for some time. The men were equipped with woolen uniforms alone. Under the terrific heat of the sun many were prostrated. Throughout the day a steady procession of stretchers carried the heat victims to the hospital. It was rather uncanny to see a man, who was talking naturally at one moment, fall unconscious to the ground at the next. The thermometer usually registered around 120 degrees from eleven to three o'clock each day. I have seen a thermometer, which registered 120 degrees inside the tent, burst after mounting to 130 in the street outside.

The site of the camp was really extremely good — for Texas. There were practically no cacti or mesquite bushes. A copious supply of good water from the city mains did much to modify the unfavorable conditions.

As soon as the camp was settled the regular army routine began. Reveille was at six in the morning, followed by mess. At seven-thirty the

companies were marched to the field in the rear of the camp and drilled for four hours. Does it sound simple and easy? Hop off your stool, Mr. Bookkeeper, and you, Mr. Manager, shuck your collar and try it, on an open space of Boston Common, avoiding all shade, some bright, July day. And then reflect that it is cool in Boston every day of the summer, if you think in terms of Texas.

Mess came again at twelve. The afternoons were, theoretically, at our disposal, but owing to the unsettled state of affairs they were usually spent in detail work. Retreat was at five-thirty, followed by mess again at six. During the evenings, no work was done. Taps blew at ten. Twice a day came the sick-call, when all who were unwell went to the hospital tent for treatment.

The Machine-Gun Company was exempt from guard duty. One infantry company in each regiment had interior guard duty every night. One company from each regiment was also sent out alternately as a border patrol. As international affairs at that time were more or less on the ragged edge, it was considered neces-

MORNING DRILL AT CAMP COTTON

CHURCH

sary to keep a platoon of machine-gun men in readiness for action throughout the night. Hence, two squads were required to sleep under arms — fully dressed (boots and all), with loaded side-arms, and a machine gun with twelve hundred rounds of ammunition outside the tent.

At first we were forced to sleep on the ground, as no other provision had been made. The early arrival of bunks did much to alleviate the discomfort of the existing conditions.

CHAPTER V

THE WELCOME TO TEXAS

After the first week affairs became less complicated and opportunities were given the men to inspect El Paso. Each day one fourth of the company were allowed a pass from one o'clock until nine in the evening. In some respects the city differs greatly from those of the East. It is practically new, having grown from a town of ten thousand to a flourishing city of eighty thousand in the past fifteen years. It is thoroughly up-to-date, with large buildings, fine streets, and good hotels. Situated directly on the border, it has been, until the recent crisis, an important commercial center. Much of the great wealth of northern Mexico came to the city. This enormous revenue is now, of course, cut off. The city is extremely local, as there is no other important place within several hundred miles, but it is not essentially provincial. It was made picturesque to Yankee eyes by the many soldiers and Mexicans who thronged the streets. El Paso has a large Mexican population

which occupies a spacious quarter of the city. Several regiments of United States troops are stationed there permanently, and Fort Bliss, five miles from the heart of the city, but closely connected with it by beautiful boulevards, lined with fine residences, is one of the most important army posts of the Southwest.

The city is practically under martial law. It has a small number of policemen, whose duties are mainly to regulate traffic, but all the streets, particularly in the unsettled sections, are patrolled by provost guards, detailed from the army. These guards wear a blue arm-band, bearing the letters, "M.P." (Military Police). Their work is of great benefit to the city, as they perform their duties conscientiously and faithfully. Armed with rifles and clubs, they are extremely effective, as the citizens realize that they have strict orders and are required to obey them without prejudice or discrimination.

Contrary to the general belief, the danger along the border States is not wholly from foreign raids, but partly from the great Mexican population within our own States of the South-

west. The population of El Paso, for instance, is sixty per cent Mexican. As these aliens are segregated in one quarter of the city, and are closely united in every way, chiefly through mutual hatred of the "gringo," they would prove a serious menace if an attack or uprising took place. And even at towns like Las Cruces, New Mexico, over fifty miles from the border, a company of infantry is required to keep the foreign population in check.

The Mexicans whom one sees at every hand in the Southwest are chiefly of the peon type. Because of the higher wages and better conditions in general, of our own country, they have flocked in thousands across the border. They are, almost without exception, illiterate, and according to Southwestern opinion, absolutely unscrupulous and untrustworthy. The men are natural cowards, but when inflamed with liquor, become reckless and decidedly dangerous. It is not at all unusual for two or three unarmed soldiers to put to flight a dozen Mexicans in a free-for-all fight. Their usual method is to shoot from an alleyway or to stab from behind. While a soldier might hesitate to go alone by

night through some streets in the Mexican district of El Paso, a group of six would be as safe as if they were in camp. Those Mexicans living at more isolated points in the rural sections are openly more peaceable and quiet. They are very obliging; often have I had a glass of water, or bought *leche* (milk) at little farms in the country. At any place, however, a soldier who addresses a single Mexican receives more civil treatment than he would at the hands of his own countrymen. At times they are almost obsequious. Possibly this respect is due to a certain fear of the man in uniform, for the unruly Mexican fares ill with the soldier.

The Mexican women whom one sees in the "district" are fat, dirty, and disreputable-looking; the children wallow in the filth of the streets or bathe in the slime of the irrigation canal, and seem to thrive under conditions which would kill an ordinary American child. One is not favorably impressed by these aliens of the Southwest; yet they are representative of the bulk of the population of their own country.

After the arrival of the Guard, El Paso had

a military population of about fifty thousand men. It can be easily understood, when one considers that the lowest-paid soldier receives fifteen dollars a month (and almost without exception spends it all), why such a gathering of troops is of enormous commercial benefit to Texas.

Of the Texans themselves, and their attitude toward the soldiery, I cannot speak highly. Apparently they utterly failed to understand and appreciate the great sacrifices which many of the men from the North and East were making, for their benefit and protection, and theirs alone. I am greatly indebted to individuals to whom I was personally known for many kindnesses, so I write only of the treatment of the Guard as a whole. In the first place, a soldier is never welcome anywhere — unless it is payday; then he is greeted with the proverbial open arms. Ordinarily, he is merely overlooked; if he is in trouble, he must look to other soldiers to help him out; from the civilian he receives only ridicule and looks of disgust. Some disorder is inevitable among fifty thousand men, be they citizens or soldiers, yet the people have no tol-

eration for it. I have heard accounts from other men of incidents which sound incredible, but to which I give credence. One man told me that a citizen attempted to charge him five cents for a glass of water. I will relate two incidents that came to my personal knowledge which illustrate the spirit of the people of Texas.

At a dance-hall in Ysleta, a small town near El Paso, the proprietor placed the following sign at the door:—

> DANCING FOR LADIES AND GENTLEMEN
> SOLDIERS AND DOGS NOT ALLOWED

I have not the slightest doubt that a disturbance occurred whenever a group of soldiers saw that sign. Nor do I doubt that the local press blossomed forth on the following day with an editorial condemning the vicious temperament of the soldiery.

At a "hop" given by the officers, a man from our company performed the duties of usher. He was a college man, of extreme refinement, very

well-to-do, and essentially a gentleman. During the course of the evening he made the acquaintance of a young lady from the city. As she was leaving she said:—

"Oh, won't you come to the Country Club with me to a dance next week?"

"You must not forget that I am only an enlisted man and cannot get away at any time," he reminded her.

She drew herself up, and walked away, saying icily:—

"Pardon me, but I am only allowed to associate with officers."

And yet, when the Mexicans raid the border, the people at once cry:—

"Where are our soldiers?"

Is it any wonder that a self-respecting man from another part of the country should be, to say the least, somewhat nettled at such treatment?

With the arrival of the Guard prices went up in El Paso. This was especially true in the case of souvenirs and Mexican knick-knacks. An article which cost a dollar a month before was now priced at ten or fifteen. Hair-cuts ad-

"ON THE FRONTIER OF CIVILIZATION"

(The huts in the background are on Mexican soil)

vanced to thirty-five and fifty cents. And in every line of business it must be said that the merchants made the best of their opportunity. On pay-day the camp was thronged with peddlers, selling souvenirs of every kind at exorbitant prices. Truly the merchants of the Southwest are good business men!

CHAPTER VI

THE STEADY GRIND

Let us return to camp.

Through the regimental street goes the bugle corps at five-forty-five, shrilling the baneful "first call," which summons three thousand men to their daily tasks. From every tent there come yawns and deep groans. Some men are donning shoes and leggins; others sleep peacefully, regardless of the din around them. The corporal gets up unwillingly enough and proceeds to arouse his squad.

"Come on! Get up!" he commands, to a figure which is entirely covered by the blanket. "You have only six minutes."

"Don't wanna get up," comes a muffled voice.

"Hurry up, or I'll pull you out!"

"Say, leave me alone. I've got all my clothes on and I can get up in a second," says the other wrathfully, poking a sleepy-looking head from the blanket. Sleep is precious now.

"Never mind. When I say get up, you get

up." The corporal seizes a leg and pulls vigorously.

"Hey, you fat mutt, leave me alone."

"Don't you call me a fat mutt," protests the corporal. "Out with him!"

And amid the laughter of the squad the victim's bunk is tipped over, depositing him in a heap on the ground. A volley of curses, directed blindly at fate, Texas, and the corporal, follows.

"Tent-police for a week. Shut up!" admonishes the injured non-com.

"Don't give a damn," murmurs the other, going to sleep on the ground.

"Another day!" volunteers some one. "I'll have gray hair if this keeps up."

"I was just dreaming I was swimming at Revere Beach."

The "I can't get 'em up" of reveille sounds. There is a scurry for side-arms and a dash for the street.

"Machine-Gun Company, fall in!" comes the call of the top sergeant from the head of the street.

"Say, where the hell 's my leggins?"

"Who took my side-arms?"

"Company 'ten-shun. Sergeants Gordon, Grigg, Johnson —"

Another day has begun.

Two weeks after our arrival we had a glimpse of the real border life. At four o'clock one afternoon a number of shots came suddenly from the direction of the outposts. The entire camp was in an uproar at once. The shots continued for several minutes. It appeared later that a horse had crossed the line and an American had attempted to overtake it, when he was fired upon by Mexican sentries. A similar occurrence came a week later. At nine o'clock in the evening a bullet entered one of the canteens. A general fusillade followed, and things looked serious for a time. Companies were formed and prepared for action; lights were extinguished. We formed in squads in the street and were ordered to lie down. There came a sudden tramp, tramp, from behind us. It grew louder and approached us steadily. Two companies of infantry, barely visible on account of the darkness, marched past us, and went toward the border. I shall never forget

the great impression which that scene made upon me. Not a word was spoken, save the whispered commands of the officers. And at this crisis, when, for all they knew, the men were to see real fighting, the ranks were so even, the order so good, that they might well have been regulars. For the first and only time we experienced that thrill which comes only with the anticipation of fighting. No one seemed in the least regretful at the possible opportunity; all were tense and motionless, hoping against hope that the order, "Fall in!" would come. The firing stopped after a time. As taps had blown we were ordered to sleep under arms. Nothing came of the incident, however.

Until the 15th of July, no pay had been received from the Federal Government, and the financial status of the majority was extremely low. Accordingly, when one morning the pay-call was blown before reveille, it was greeted with cheers, howls, and other evidences of delight.

Pay-day is the great event in the life of the soldier. It is the assurance of a month's supply of tobacco (which he providently buys immedi-

ately after receiving his money), and a few days of luxurious extravagance. As the National Guard was now in the federal service, we received the same amount as men of like rank in the regular army.

A short drill of perhaps an hour takes the place of the usual four-hour maneuvers. The companies are formed at nine o'clock with the men in order of rank. First the top sergeant, then the sergeants, corporals, cooks, farriers, first-class privates, and privates. The paymaster, an officer from the regular army, sits at a bench with huge stacks of gold and silver before him. No paper money is used, as there might be a sand-storm any minute. He calls the name and announces the amount due; the recipient salutes, takes the money, and passes on. It is done very quickly; an entire company is usually paid in less than fifteen minutes. The companies are then formed in their streets and the amounts due for canteen checks are paid to the first sergeant. (Credit amounting to not more than one third of the monthly pay is extended.) When this formality is concluded, individual debts are canceled.

"Want to settle that two-fifty I lent you last month? I want to pay it to Jack," says one.

"I owe him half a note myself. As soon as I get this changed I'll give him the whole business. Then we'll be square. All right?"

And so it goes. The many mathematical intricacies into which these men become entangled require the services of an expert accountant before they can strike a balance. But as taps blow and the men return from town, many of them are penniless, all debts have been paid, and every one is happy.

Our morning maneuvers carried us within a few yards of the border, and it was very interesting to watch the actions of the Mexicans on the other side. We could see an occasional member of the Carranzista patrol, wearing a huge sombrero, and watching us intently.

By this time some members of the company had obtained quite satisfactory results from the little notes which had been scattered broadcast from the car windows during the trip from Massachusetts. The mails brought frequent letters and presents. Cigarettes, tobacco, and post-cards were generally the offerings. A very

sensible young lady from Norwich, New York, presented one of the men with a perfectly good set of underwear, of local manufacture. As the Boston papers chronicled daily the doings of the companies and of some individuals, those men sometimes received congratulatory notes from unknown admirers in the East.

A decided innovation was afforded during the middle of July by the arrival at our company street of a piano. This was hired by one of the boys as a partial solution of the problem "what to do." Piano-players in the organization at once gained great prestige. The instrument was placed on a platform of boards in one of the tents. It seemed very strange, upon entering the camp, to hear from such a place the delightful strains of the latest rag-time floating through the air. When later the piano was sent back to its owner, upon our return from outpost duty, its proprietor viewed with sadness the ravages of dust and sand, and remarked, "This is worth about five dollars as kindling now." For it was evident that an army camp in Texas was no place for musical instruments of any kind.

Up to the 20th of July, our outfit had been without means of transportation for guns and ammunition. Our thoughtful Government eventually decided to supply us with mules. Details were sent to the stock-yards, about two miles away, for the animals. Some were quite fortunate in drawing the stock; others were decidedly unlucky. After about two hours the advance guard appeared astride the more peaceable beasts. An intermittent stream followed throughout the day, until finally some mules appeared, dragging the men after them. The newcomers were placed in a corral until the time for training and packing should come.

Several duties were required of machine-gun companies outside the ordinary tasks of the infantrymen. Mule *aparejos*, on which the guns and ammunition were suspended, were stuffed with hay. Simple as the operation may appear, it was really difficult and tedious. Extreme care had to be taken to stuff them evenly, lest the backs of the mules should be made sore.

Much time was also required for cleaning and filling the machine-gun clips. Sunday morning,

when we had anticipated a day of blissful idleness, was a favorite time for this duty.

Of the regiments of the regular army also stationed at Camp Cotton, the Twenty-third Infantry was the nearest to us. Many of the "regulars," curious to investigate the new arrivals, came to our regiment. As our maneuvers were humorous in their eyes, they came again and brought friends. Soon many acquaintances were formed among them. Contrary to general opinion, their treatment of the Guard was very good. I frequently visited them at their camp and was well received. They escorted me to their band concerts and shows, and gave me a standing invitation to come and mess with them at any time. The army mess was of excellent quality, so I often took advantage of the opportunity and reveled in meals of pie, lemonade, and unlimited "seconds" — bounties unprocurable at my own mess. I found that they were all real men, and those I knew intimately, real friends, though possibly they did not come up to the standards of that doubtful social veneer — culture. What if their advice were given in a somewhat superior way? They

MORNING EXERCISE

were masters of their trade; we were merely apprentices.

Religious services were held each Sunday at our camp. The Catholics marched to the Ninth Regiment; the Protestant service took place at the Eighth. The chaplain, clad in a white robe, gave a short prayer, led the singing of a few hymns, and followed with a sermon. It was not such a sermon as one hears from the pulpit; it was essentially a talk delivered by a man, who was every inch a man, to other men. The chaplain, H. Boyd Edwards, was undoubtedly the most popular officer in camp. He was always ready to hear the story of the soldier's difficulties, and besides sympathy, he gave genuine aid. He cashed checks, money-orders, and advanced money to men whose families were in financial difficulties at home.

We had been in O.D. woolens since June 19, but at last, on the 20th of July, the clothing requisitions arrived. A clothing allowance of approximately forty-five dollars was given each man. He could order whatever he desired, provided he did not exceed that amount. For a long time our men had been clad in shabby, ill-

fitting clothes. This was a bitter humility when they contrasted their appearance with that of the men of the army. The regulars are always immaculately dressed. I have never seen one outside of camp who was not a picture of cleanliness and neatness. We received complete outfits, consisting of underwear, socks, well-fitting shoes, hats, and uniforms. Every article was of admirable workmanship, conforming exactly to the demands of neatness, utility, and durability. Hats and shoes are the apple of the soldier's eye. The former must be creased in the regulation manner, with an absolutely straight brim. As even a slight rain works havoc with their perfect conformation, they are frequently blocked by the army tailor. It at once became the direct aim of the Guardsmen to care for their clothing in such a way that they might "look like the regulars."

Very few members of the company had any practical experience in firing the machine gun, so occasional visits were made to a target-range at a point ten miles from El Paso. Under the watchful eye of the Captain and several moving-picture machines, the squads were drilled.

Each man was given both machine-gun and pistol practice with ball cartridges. It was on these trips that we were first enabled to obtain a good view of the country around us, the site of the range being several hundred feet above the level country. To the east extended, as far as the eye could reach, a level plain some ten miles in width. A few tiny specks, betokening the presence of clustered houses, could be seen at distant intervals. The long line which gradually faded altogether proved to be a railroad, as revealed by apparently motionless bodies from which a thin column of smoke curled lazily in the air. These could be seen at several points along the line. At the opposite side of the valley was a long chain of low, blue mountains. Occasionally a cloud above us would cast its shadow across the plain, covering portions of it with a dark green mantle. Far to the south, beyond the river in Mexico, we could dimly see a lone peak covered with snow. At least a hundred and fifty miles must have separated us from that eminence. How many scenes of desolation and poverty lay between the borders of our own country and that white mountain-top

which arose in all its grandeur from the unhappy country!

Gradually the hardships began to lessen; the company became accustomed to the hot days. Prostrations in the regiment diminished in number and eventually became rare occurrences. As the probability of intervention decreased and the possibility of returning home became less visionary, the men's spirits rose. The uncomfortable afternoons were spent in quest for diversion in the city, and in frequent bridge and poker games, in letter-writing, or sleeping at camp. With the end of the month came our turn for outpost duty. On the 26th of July, we struck the tents, loaded the baggage on large trucks, and left Camp Cotton for the cement works, five miles westward, for a stay of two weeks.

CHAPTER VII

OUTPOST DUTY

WITHIN a mile of the junction of the States of Texas and New Mexico and the country of Mexico are situated two of the greatest industrial plants of the Southwest — the works of the Southwestern Portland Cement Company and the huge smelter and refinery. Both employ hundreds of Mexicans; the smelter handles about thirty-five per cent of the finer metals which are purified in the United States. On account of its proximity to the border the situation is not without its dangers; the presence of so many Mexicans on the American side renders it doubly precarious. Under the shadow of the smelter, on the banks of the Rio Grande, is the village of Smeltertown, or El Toro (The Bull). This is inhabited solely by the Mexican employees of the two concerns; there is not a white man in the place. It is a squalid, vile-smelling little spot, absolutely devoid of sanitary conveniences, and, I was told, wholly typical of all real Mexican villages. There is no semblance

of regularity in its streets, or, more properly speaking, alleyways. One-story adobe shacks with whitewashed walls are set out in one confused mass, adapted more to the limitations of space than to expediency or sanitation. To further arouse the naturally unruly temperament of the aliens, there is a "social club" in the center of the village, where the workman may, and too often does, indulge in *aguardiente* and vile beer. Pay-day frequently produces an embryo revolution. At the western end of the town there are two large railroad bridges over the river, a few hundred yards apart, which connect Texas and New Mexico. These are naturally of great importance. Considering the magnitude of the two concerns, their vulnerability through the unruly population both of the immediate vicinity and of Mexico itself, together with the absolute necessity for protecting the two bridges, one can understand why this point is the most important on the Mexican border.

Our machine-gun company, supported by two companies of infantry, was encamped on the small plaza where the offices of the cement

ONE OF THE BRIDGES

plant were located, within a few feet of the river. Sanitation was of the best; the shower-baths at the works were placed at our disposal — in fact, camping conditions were ideal. The mules were quartered in a corral under the nearer railroad bridge.

Each night one squad was required to perform guard duty; after this, a twenty-four-hour relief from duty was allowed.

Immediately upon our arrival at the new camp, the first squad was sent away for its turn. We carried blanket-rolls and one day's rations. After a half-hour's ride in one of the service automobiles, we came to a small railroad station in New Mexico; the remainder of the trip was made on foot. The site of our outpost was not ideal, comfort considered. From the military point of view, however, it was of some importance. At this point the railroad runs through a deep gully, surmounted on either side by precipitous and rocky hills. Before reaching the station it disappears in a tunnel for about two hundred yards. This in itself was sufficient to require military protection. A half-mile to the south, on the summit of the hill, was

the border-line. From a pass leading, on the farther side, to Mexico, there meandered two small foot-paths, of sufficient width to allow the descent of men and mules. As the country was extremely wild and uninhabited in this quarter, this was a favorite route of smugglers into the United States. On the opposite height, shielded from the sky-line by a miniature fort of rocks, we took our position, relieving the machine-gun company of the Fifth Massachusetts which had preceded us at the smelter. The non-coms were talking over the various details concerning the new camp, while the rest of us stayed at the fort and chatted with the privates of the Fifth; they gave us some canned goods and tobacco which they did not need, and pictured vividly the discomfort we were to undergo. The non-coms then returned and the Fifth prepared to leave us.

"Why, hello, Batch! What are you doing here?"

I turned around and saw a club brother of mine from Harvard, whom I had not seen since June. He proved to be a sergeant in the Fifth.

"Last place in the world I should expect to meet you — in this wild country," he said.

"Same here."

We talked for a little while and discussed the probable whereabouts of our college friends, until his squad was ready to leave.

We trained our machine gun on the Mexican trail on the opposite hill. In addition to this defense, two men were required to patrol, in two-hour shifts, day and night, the little path that ran parallel to the railroad.

I cannot properly describe the exquisite discomfort of the place. Shade there was none; the rocks were veritable radiators of heat. Because of the rough character of the ground it was next to impossible to drive pins for the small tents. The heat of the early afternoon made thirst insatiable; hourly trips were made to the little station, a half-mile away, where canteens might be filled from a tank with tepid, alkaline water. On account of the monotony of the country, the long hours of patrol seemed endless. The only diversion was an occasional chat with the infantrymen who were comfortably posted in the cool depths of the tunnel entrance. How-

ever, the noon of the following day finally arrived, and we were relieved by the luckless third squad. Our reward, no mean dispensation, was twenty-four hours of absolute rest, during which time we might, and did, have passes into the city.

After a few days we were entirely relieved from guard duty, and were kept as reserves at the camp. Life was beginning to be quite tolerable, after all. Drilling at first occupied only two hours of the morning; the remainder of the time was spent in endless card-games and blissful naps in the tent. But our momentary dreams of delightful inertia were abruptly dispelled. Our friends, the mules, were fast becoming slothful and indifferent to all save their ration of oats and their two daily watering-trips to the river. We were ordered to spend our drill period in accustoming them to their packs and loads, so that we might use them in our maneuvers.

The army mule is undoubtedly endowed with more obstinacy and plain "cussedness" to the inch than any other animal on the face of the earth. His mild, innocent eyes are merely the

EL TORO

CAMP AND CEMENT PLANT

screen for the villainy which he cherishes in his soul. Walk on his right side and he will stop short. Look directly at him and he will walk steadily backwards — nothing short of a stone wall will stop him. Bring him his oats and he will reward you with a well-placed kick. They say that to be able to handle a mule perfectly, you must know him. I fear that few of the boys in our company had more than a passing acquaintance with our animals.

To pack a mule, you must first get the mule. The mere process of inveigling him from the corral was a matter of many minutes. Then the blinder must be placed over his eyes. That was more easily accomplished. Clothe him with blanket and *corona*, lift the *aparejo*, set it properly on his back, adjust the crupper, tighten the cinch, and lo! the mule is harnessed — on paper. This formula, however, does not take into account the vagaries of the animal's disposition. Let the blinder slip, the mule gives one jump, scatters the packers to the four points of the compass, discards all superfluous weight, and disappears in a cloud of dust. And woe be unto him who blocks the mule's rush to freedom!

Many minutes later the truant is led back, with fire and happiness in his eye. For has he not gained a great moral victory?

A few days later, after having extracted a heavy toll of bruises and sores, the mules became more accustomed to their burdens. The entire number could then be harnessed and packed in some forty-five minutes. They resigned themselves to their labors, but when put to work their devilishness decreased. By the end of our term of service every member of the company was able to pack well; the time necessary for this operation was reduced to five minutes for twelve mules. Yet, even at the end, our beasts would not infrequently exhibit some of their old fire and temporarily demoralize the whole company.

One morning the stable sergeant discovered that two of the mules were missing. A search of the vicinity was made at once, but without success. The mules were gone; we never did catch them. Hence the new duty of stable guard was necessitated to prevent further inroads upon the occupants of the corral. At seven each night a non-com and two privates would leave

the camp and do patrol duty at the stables. This detail, however, was not so unpopular as it might have been. A few boxes of crackers and bottles of beer from the canteen did much to enliven the hours of relief. Occasionally a Mexican, wandering home in the early hours of the morning, would have to be stopped and searched for arms. Such encounters also helped to break the monotony of the night's work.

Shortly after our arrival, Sergeant Pond, of the Twenty-third Infantry, U.S.A., was detailed to us as a lieutenant. He proceeded to whip the company into shape. We were at first drilled with the mules near the camp itself; short marches along the road were succeeded by longer hikes through the mountains, under actual service conditions. Two-mile hikes gave way to stiffer ones of three and four. Soon the entire morning was devoted to maneuvers. Those who had formerly looked upon ten- and twelve-mile marches as things beyond the power of man, now conceded that they might be possible, as they realized that in the near future they would be actualities.

During our stay at the cement plant we had

mess in a large wooden shack, provided with luxurious wooden tables and benches, which had been constructed by our predecessors. The food, however, was very poor. The regiment owned a field-kitchen, or "slum-gun," a bulky vehicle in which food might be prepared on the march. The Powers decided that a trial should be given to test its cooking abilities. As there were necessarily limitations upon its capacity, only a small variety of dishes was possible. Beans, prunes, coffee, and "fly" soup comprised the menu. These were not always successfully prepared, but that fact was of little importance. There was also a rumor that the authorities were trying to make nine days' rations last for two weeks, just to see if it could be done. From the scarcity of food, I judge that it was attempted and have little doubt that the experiment was considered successful.

For the last week of our patrol service we were again required to perform guard duty. This time the post was a flat mesa overlooking a bridge across the Rio Grande. Between our position and the river was a small Mexican settlement. Guards were posted at twilight

THE CORRAL AT THE CEMENT PLANT

OFF FOR HOME

—about seven-thirty—and relieved at five. During these periods we had opportunity to contemplate, if not to appreciate, the beauties of Texas nights. During the evening, the moon rose gradually over the mountains, flooding everything with brilliant light. Below us we could see the winding river, shining like a silver ribbon tossed haphazard upon a dark coverlet. A delightful breeze carried with it the soft, strange noises of the night, or the clear challenge, "Who goes there?" of the sentry on the road below. After a time there was a relief, and we were allowed four hours' sleep.

At the time of my next guard, everything has changed. It is early morning; the moon has disappeared and the stars are gradually fading, leaving a cloak of darkness behind them. In the little village at the foot of the hill, all are astir. The fowl begin their noisy prophecies of the approaching day; dogs growl; and the exquisite shriek of a Mexican burro adds to the tumult. Soon the Mexican women appear in the yards, lantern in hand, and cut wood for the fire, while simultaneously the lusty howls of numerous embryo Villas mingle in concert. Then, as

the first gray light comes over the mountains, the men gather, and, bearing their dinner-pails, make their way to the distant smelter.

Now it is light. Hordes of tiny children are already playing in the squalor and dirt of the little settlement, mingling promiscuously with the scattering groups of unconcerned chickens, goats, burros, and other residents of the barnyard. An auto-truck appears at the bridge. The order is given, "Pack!" We shoulder our blanket-rolls, make our way to the truck, and arrive at the camp just as the sun appears over the mountains.

On August 9, as our term of patrol duty had expired, we struck camp, and marched over the mountains to Camp Cotton.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BIG RAINS

Camp Cotton had an entirely new appearance when we returned. Prisoners had been working continually during our absence, with gratifying results. The streets were covered with cinders to keep down the dust. The two great institutions of the camp — the canteen and the Y.M.C.A. — now occupied large wooden buildings, furnished with all necessities. Wooden flooring had been constructed for the tents; the entire camp had been wired for electric lights; shower-baths had been set up near the canteen.

The canteen is to the army post what the general store is to the country village. Here the soldier can obtain, at moderate prices, all the necessities and luxuries of his life. Tobacco, candy, crackers, and canned goods, ice-cream, tonic, and two-per-cent beer, are the most popular purchases; all kinds of toilet articles, shoe-polish, and a thousand and one other indispensables may also be obtained. The canteens

of the army are run by members of the companies. The money thus obtained reverts to the company funds.

I mention the liquor problem in the army for the benefit of those whose practical knowledge of the subject is limited to the information contained in pamphlets distributed by the W.C.T.U. Until a few years ago soldiers were allowed to purchase beer and light wines at their company canteens. These were regarded by the authorities as being practically innocuous; their sale could be easily restricted and excesses prevented. However, it was decided that liquor should be prohibited in the army; so, figuratively speaking, the canteen was abolished. At present, the sale of one- and two-percent beer only is allowed. As a result of this prohibitory mandate the territories adjacent to the army posts became infested with saloons, "soldiers' clubs," and, where the sale of liquor was prohibited by civil statutes, dives and rumholes of the lowest order. Where the soldier was formerly content with drinking real beer in his own canteen, he now walks for five minutes and procures whiskey, or something worse,

REGIMENTAL HEADQUARTERS

CLEANING CLIPS

with unfortunate results. For soldiers can buy liquor anywhere, prohibition or no. Yet the average soldier is of no more vicious temperament than the average civilian. Nevertheless, the narrow-minded type of cock-sure reformer hails as a great victory the abolition of liquor in the army, while, instead of offering a remedy, he has added to the perniciousness of the evil.

The work of the Y.M.C.A. among military circles is of great benefit to the soldiers. We were all delighted with the recreation hall which was maintained at our camp. At one end was the desk, where stamps and post-cards could be obtained and money-orders cashed. The room was filled with benches well supplied with writing materials, which were furnished free of charge by the organization. At the opposite end of the building there was a piano, surrounded with tables and the necessaries for playing checkers and dominoes. On the bulletin-board all notices, baseball scores, telegrams, and papers of general interest were posted. Boston and New York newspapers were kept in files. The success of this enterprise was undoubted, and the *camaraderie* between the men

in charge and the soldiers was amazing. Disorder within the building was absolutely unknown. By a mild and almost imperceptible persuasiveness, the attendants exerted a very beneficial influence over the men. For example, to curb profanity, they did not say, "Swear and you will not go to Heaven," but they posted small notices like this: "If you must swear, put it in writing." This appealed to one's sense of humor and brought the desired result.

Each night, the Y.M.C.A. shack was crowded to overflowing. The benches were filled by those writing letters; many played checkers and dominoes; an admiring group always surrounded the pianist who was rendering the latest selections of rag-time.

At various intervals vaudeville shows were presented by the talent of the regiment. A stage was improvised and a limited number of benches were constructed for the spectators. As these affairs were at first the only diversion afforded in the camp, they were very popular. The regimental band starts the ceremonies with a lively tune. The first number on the programme is a musical offering by a quartette

from K Company. They are riotously applauded, especially by the members of K Company. Next comes a parody on "I Wonder How the Old Folks are at Home." After an embarrassed apology directed to the officers, the quartette extols the cooking of mother, temptingly visualizes the beefsteak and fried potatoes of former times, and ends with a prodigous "swipe" — "Oh, I wonder how that table looks at home." This piece is the triumph of the evening; howls and well-simulated cries of woe go up from every quarter. The Colonel and his officers smile tolerantly and applaud mildly. Then comes "Eddie, the Famous Hypnotist," known in stage circles as Professor Edwards. His victims writhe and roll in a terrifying manner, and perform realistically the most ridiculous antics. Now we have the "Pride of South Boston," who whistles accompaniments to phonograph records, and yodles in the approved Swiss fashion. An extremely melodramatic sketch follows, replete with intrigue, espionage, and treason. All the actors (for the time being) are officers of high rank; the minor part is taken by a mere Colonel. The

climax comes when the prisoner opens his khaki blouse, staggers several times, and confesses in a voice that could be heard throughout the camp, "I am a spy — I glory in it — I am proud to die for my country." Prolonged applause follows; the band plays the "Star-Spangled Banner," and the entertainment ends in a blaze of glory.

Eventually the repertory of the amateurs was exhausted, so a new means of entertainment was necessary. One day the camp rejoiced at the news that the Y.M.C.A. was to hold moving-picture shows nightly. A frame was erected for the screen; at the opposite end of the "theater," the operator's box was constructed about ten feet above the ground. "Opening night" for the movies was an important affair at the camp. The officers of the regiment were on the front benches; behind them stood several hundred movie "fans" in khaki. As the first picture was thrown upon the screen, a cheer went up from the crowd.

"Just like home, Jack?" shouted one to a friend.

"Let's see, the last time I went to a show, I

A "TROUBADOUR"

went with Jenny. Remember that last Saturday night?" reminisced another.

The entertainment was a huge success. No longer need the Guardsman recall with a hopeless sigh the curls of "little Mary," or the dimples of Anita; now he could see them night after night. The pictures shown at the camp were of very good quality, as the latest releases were easily obtained at El Paso. Five reels a night were shown, usually comprising one feature and three shorter films. Of these, the comedies proved most popular. The soldiers formed an extremely critical audience. Free from the disapproving gaze of the usher, which would have restrained them at home, they continually announced in loud tones their unvarnished opinion of the acting. Realistic love-scenes were greeted with cheers; pictures pertaining to military affairs failed to arouse favorable enthusiasm, as their many shortcomings provoked howls of derision. One particular night the left-handed salute of a very un-military officer nearly caused a riot. Until the return of the troops, the movies continued to be the chief form of amusement. No vaudeville show was

complete without one or two reels; the regimental boxing-matches were always supplemented by pictures.

August 15 ushered in the annual rainy season. Heretofore there had been absolutely no rain; everything was parched and dry; the lawns in the city were mere patches of burned grass. At four o'clock in the afternoon the deluge began. There were the usual warnings, — portentous, black clouds in the west, — yet no one realized their significance. Suddenly — splash! the camp was a mill-pond. The shower did not consist of mere drops of moisture; it was made of real water, sheets of water, bucketfuls of water. A heavy wind raised havoc with the tents; many collapsed or blew away entirely, leaving the clothing of their occupants at the mercy of the torrent. Pools formed in the streets; these joined other pools and formed brooks; in that capacity they flowed underneath the tents, flooded the cook-shacks, extinguished the fires. Yet in fifteen minutes the shower was over.

We grew to anticipate this daily bath and guarded against it. Trenches, a foot deep, were

dug around the tents. Every day at four, as if at a given signal, the rain began. The emergency squad at once started work; trenches were deepened and outlets made; weak places in the fortifications were strengthened. By these provisions a fair degree of comfort and dryness was maintained. On one eventful evening, however, we were completely outgeneraled. At the termination of the periodical four-o'clock shower, every one sighed with relief, and abandoned all thought of further trouble. At seven-thirty, in violation of all rules of precedent, the rain started again. It lasted for an hour. We were caught off our guard; the usual first-aid methods were of no avail. Within a few minutes the company street was a sheet of running water; it overflowed the trenches and ran, like a river, through the tents. Every one took refuge on his cot. The water deepened until it was within a few inches of the top of the cot. Now a cake of soap flows merrily along from the next tent, followed by wooden boxes and all kinds of refuse. Here comes a shoe, drifting fitfully like a water-soaked log. Howls of dismay arise from the unhappy man whose tooth-

brush falls from its place of safety and joins the ever-increasing number of derelicts. Finally the rain stops, and all hands, stripped to the skin, begin the hopeless rescue work. Blankets are soaked; all articles of clothing which had been left under the cots are saturated with water and mud, or else have drifted away altogether.

"If any one says there's no rain in this country, just leave him to me," explodes one, who has just discovered his hat upon an island at the foot of the street.

"Well, we won't need a bath for some time," volunteers the optimist.

He is mistaken. In the morning, when much of the water has disappeared, a thick layer of sticky mud remains. Shoes and leggins are covered with slime. Every one is spotted with the unpleasant mixture. Drill is abandoned for the morning and the day is spent in cleaning the tents, washing clothes, or digging personal belongings from the fond embrace of Mother Earth. Yet at exactly four o'clock the same afternoon, the daily shower makes its appearance.

During the middle of August, a baseball league was formed, comprising about ten teams from the regular army and from the National Guard. Gloves and other accouterments were presented by the officers; practice was held daily on the drill-field. The Ninth Massachusetts had an extremely successful team. Trips were made frequently to Fort Bliss, where the batteries of the Guard and several army organizations were stationed. The important games were held Sunday afternoon, as nearly every one was relieved from duty at that time. An intense rivalry naturally arose among the various regiments, and the games were well attended by throngs of soldier-fans.

On August 19 the College Club of El Paso tendered a reception to all college men among the Guardsmen, at the Country Club, a few miles beyond Fort Bliss. Passes were granted to all who desired them; transportation was afforded by motor-trucks furnished by the regiments. Several loads left Camp Cotton at seven o'clock. We were hardly on our way before the rain started in earnest. Sheltered only

by ponchos, we were soon drenched. It was a night I never shall forget. Despite the pouring rain, there was a bright moon, which gleamed oddly upon the spattered roads. It was almost as light as day; we could see the country for miles around. Just beyond Mount Franklin, vividly brilliant in the moonlight, there was a double rainbow — two complete arches of dazzling color, stretching across the sky. The rain finally ceased; the rainbows disappeared; and the entire plain glistened under the beams of the incomparable Texas moon.

At eight-thirty we arrived at the club and found a jolly reception awaiting us. Beer, tonic, crackers, cigars, and cigarettes were set forth in abundance. Nearly all the larger colleges of the country were represented.

"Where do you come from?" one would ask.

"Harvard," was the answer.

"I'm from Michigan myself. Say, do you happen to know Jim Brown? Junior, I think he is."

"Well, rather. He roomed next to me last year."

"Good old Jim. Say, can't you picture him now at the Country Club, surrounded by a swell bunch of girls, and —"

"That's enough. I'm homesick already."

"Did Jim ever tell you about the time when —"

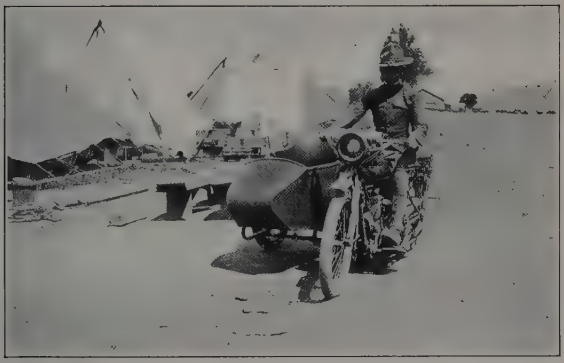
And so it went. Every one met men who knew friends of his or of somebody else whom he knew.

College rivalries were forgotten; groups of men gave their songs and cheers; their opponents applauded and replied with similar outpourings. There were reminiscences of college traditions, track-meets, football games. For a few hours military life was swept into the background. Each man renewed temporarily his individuality, ceased to be Private Smith, or Sergeant Powers, and became Smith, Dartmouth, '18, or Powers, Michigan, '17. At eleven o'clock the last stein had been emptied, the last pretzel crunched; around the dimming fire a final chorus of cheers was given, and the big trucks started for the various camps. Such is the bond of fellowship and mutual understanding among the great fraternity of collegians.

Three days later five Indian motor-cycles arrived at the camp. These had been purchased by members of the company and were specially made to their order in Springfield, Massachusetts, then shipped to El Paso. They were built for army use, with side-car attachment. We had intended to use them for military service, but those "higher up" did not approve of motorizing the company, so that idea was abandoned. However, we were allowed to keep them at camp for personal use.

Now a new field of operations was open to us. Short trips to points of interest and the small surrounding towns were made at every opportunity. Each Sunday permission was obtained for an all-day leave; we then made longer journeys, down the Rio Grande valley, or to the north toward Las Cruces. Conditions for motoring in Texas are ideal. Fine, smooth roads join all the larger cities; even the smallest town has its gasoline station. We were thus enabled to see the real Southwest, with its fertile, fruitful valleys, its hot, sandy deserts, its prosperous cities, its quaint and dirty little Mexican villages. The heat was not excessive now during

THE RIO GRANDE



THE AUTHOR AND HIS "INDIAN"

the day; the nights were gloriously cool and delightful. Oh, the joys of speeding by night along the river, through little arbors of sunflowers, over a country almost as light as day, with the brilliant sky for a canopy, and surrounded by mountains on every side, the night wind blowing softly and fitfully the while!

CHAPTER IX

DRILLS AND RUMORS

A SHORT distance from El Paso there is a broad, flat plain, several miles in extent, its sandy waste broken only by clumps of mesquite and chaparral. To this spot, called the *Mesa* (Spanish for "table"), the companies were marched each morning and drilled, first individually, then in regimental units. Promptly at seven-thirty the bugle at camp gave the signal for the march. Mules had been packed previously — they were now regarded as an important part of the company. We usually arrived at the Mesa a little before nine o'clock — a hike of about four miles. Then for an hour there was a series of maneuvers. The mule-leaders remained with their animals in the rear while the rest of the company prepared for action.

"First squad proceed to declivity hundred yards to the right. Enemy on knoll a mile directly in front. Second squad advance, open formation, taking advantage of cover. Third

squad, extreme left — take position fifty yards in front." So come the orders.

The whistle blows. The first squad, silently congratulating themselves, take their position, scatter the centipedes from the bushes, and, with the exception of the corporal, lie down and promptly go to sleep. The luckless members of the second squad spread out in a line, about ten yards apart, and advance slowly. It is growing hot; the ammunition boxes weigh about thirty pounds each; the gun also weighs thirty. The crouching position necessary for proper cover does not make matters easier. After five minutes the order comes to assemble and take position. Weary and disgusted, the squad drops languidly and awaits further punishment. Meanwhile the other squads advance slowly in the same manner.

"Second squad — action front — target about two o'clock — those mounted men — range 750 yards."

"Two o'clock" refers to the point on the horizon corresponding to the position of the numeral for that hour on a clock-face, the observer being at the center of the face and twelve o'clock directly in front.

The gunner places the gun; the loader shoves in the clip; the corporal signals his readiness by raising the right arm.

"Open fire — one clip — automatic."

A clicking follows without explosions; the clips are not loaded. The corporal's right arm goes up again, signifying the completion of the action.

"Your ammunition is exhausted. Send for more," comes the signal.

Whereupon, Private Jones, having sworn at his corporal earlier in the morning, is aroused and ordered to get ammunition. He indignantly and slowly stretches, gets up, and makes his way to the mules, several hundred yards back. He vainly wigwags the letter "A" to the mule-leader of his squad; the signal for reserve ammunition to be unpacked. That gentleman, however, is far from Texas in his thoughts, dreaming of — well, perhaps a little girl with blue eyes, far back in Medford, Massachusetts. The now more indignant messenger arrives and berates his more fortunate companion.

"Say, what the hell is this — a picnic? They want ammunition. Why is n't it unpacked?"

COMPANY AT RETREAT

THROUGH THE FOOT-HILLS

The mule-leader nods carelessly toward the place where he had left his mule, and then shows signs of mild interest.

"Where's Sturgie gone? I left him right there."

"Sturgie" is finally discovered a short distance away, peacefully munching a mesquite bush, his thoughts also far from maneuvers.

"Say, Jack, bring him over, will you? I'm damned comfortable here."

The messenger takes two ammunition boxes from the hangars, gives the mule a kick, advising him profanely to return to his brother who is lying amidst yonder bushes. Five minutes after his departure, he returns breathless to the scene of battle, only to receive the reprimands of his corporal and the unsympathetic grins of the squad, who are busily engaged in dissecting hapless centipedes with their bolos. This goes on for about an hour. The whistle blows, the signal "assemble" is given, the company marches back to camp. The mules are unpacked and led to the corral; duty is over for the day — we think.

Directly after mess, however, the message

comes: "The Machine-Gun Company will assemble at two o'clock. Per order, the Colonel." At two, we fall in line and stand "at ease" for perhaps fifteen minutes. Finally we are marched to the front of the camp, where several other indignant companies join us.

"Form in line — three feet apart," comes the command.

The entire body stretches out in an irregular line, perhaps a quarter of a mile long.

"At the signal, police the camp, pick up everything or you will do it over again."

Again the whistle. We walk slowly along, picking here a tin can, here a "dead soldier," there a cigarette-butt. Suddenly we halt.

"As you were."

We trudge back to the road; some of us resigned; some laughing; others, who have a pass to town, murmuring profanely.

"Backward — hirch."

Back we go, up the railroad embankment, across the tracks, down the other side. One man trips and rolls into a mass of briers, tin cans, and miscellaneous débris. Others, farther down the line, finding their progress impeded by

a fence, and blind to all but orders, proceed to tear down the fence and enter an irrigated field. Their lieutenant, in no good humor at the interruption of his afternoon nap, expostulates vehemently.

"Orders, sir," suggests a private, saluting.

"Hang the orders," reluctantly returning the salute. "Use your head."

"Yes, sir." The malefactors grin and chuckle. They are avenged.

Finally the line starts again and the work goes on. As we pass through the company streets, some seize the opportunity and disappear into the tents. The canteen also offers a refuge for a large number. After thirty minutes the other end of the camp is reached, but only half the original body of men are present. The rest have "ducked."

"We are getting more like the regulars every day," murmurs a sergeant, surveying the depleted ranks.

The camp is now inspected by the Colonel himself.

"Looks some better; dismiss the men."

We return to the tents. We never know the

reason for such exercises. Some say that our company street was not clean this morning; others sullenly express their opinion that it is "just for spite." But then, "orders is orders," so we merely shake our heads and dismiss the matter.

It is now half-past three. From the tents come the clink of poker-chips, the eternal "raise you five," and the snoring of drowsy men. Some, bereft of shirts, are reading comfortably on their cots; others, at the water-faucet, are endeavoring to remove from their faces a thick accumulation of alkali dust. At last, work is over. But now the whistle blows again.

"Machine-Gun Company, fall in without side-arms."

"Oh, hell! What's the use?"

The company falls in after several minutes.

"A new drain must be dug. The one dug yesterday was unsatisfactory. Corporal Duncan, take charge of the company."

And as we file down the street, armed with pick and shovel, the irrepressible members of L Company, our neighbor, grin and whistle, to the cadence of our marching feet, that unprint-

able but most appropriate tune, "You're in the army now."

There is no place in which rumor and gossip are so prevalent as in a gathering of soldiers. Conversation must lag occasionally for mere want of some reality to talk about, so quite naturally the imagination is called upon to furnish topics of interest in which there is ample material for conjecture and argument. And in no other sphere of life is the future more uncertain or more anticipated than in the army. The absolute dearth of accurate information and the large number of conflicting semi-official reports gave full sway to the imaginative powers of the Guardsmen. By August 20, all ideas of entering Mexico had been abandoned; since it was unlikely that we should stay there indefinitely, our thoughts naturally embraced the prospect of home. For our constant bedevilment and intermittent heart-break, the newspapers, as well as the more or less astounding *volte-faces* of our Government, were responsible. The headlines of the papers read, "Guardsmen will return soon"; "Recall of Guardsmen imminent." These preceded vague and uned-

ifying columns of incoherence. The wildest reports ran through the camp. Rumors, the products of overheated brains, spread from one end to the other. Like the ever-predicted end of the world, the day of our departure was always fixed. And when that day passed uneventfully, a new date was set on which we were sure to leave Texas.

"Heard the latest?" one individual asks, upon entering a tent.

A chorus of groans and jeers follows, but all listen attentively, nevertheless.

"Going home next week. Good dope. Was just over to the camp-bakery. They tell me that no bread requisitions have been made for next week. No doubt about it."

Or some one heard from a good friend of General Bell that we would parade in Boston on Labor Day. Or this private was at the telegraph office when the Colonel's orderly sent a telegram saying we should leave September 9. Many bets were made as to the duration of our stay; needless to say, the pessimists of the camp acquired large sums of money from their too hopeful comrades.

During the early part of August an order reached camp, authorizing the release from duty on the 1st of September of any Guardsmen who desired to attend colleges. A large number of men applied, in accordance with the provisions of the order. But no! A few days before the first of the month, the order was revoked and the applications rejected. It was evident that the Government considered education as a minor detail, since it was declared openly by the military authorities that the presence of the National Guard on the border was by no means necessary.

A very pleasing deviation from the monotony of military life took place during the latter part of August. A man in the company received a telegram from Boston informing him that he was the father of a husky boy. He at once invited the company to share in a celebration of his good fortune. In the cook-tent refreshments, consisting of a punch (of much higher quality than the regulation army punch) and an infinite variety of food, were served. The father beamed happily throughout the evening; to a man, the company beamed with him. And

at reveille the jovial mood of the participants, the empty plates, the lone piece of ice in the punch-bowl, asserted eloquently that full homage had been paid to the new company mascot.

One Saturday evening, after the officers' "hop," I was detailed by the Colonel to take a gentleman to town on my motor-cycle. When we arrived, shortly after midnight, he invited me to have a little supper with him before returning to camp. As I relished a change from the usual beans and coffee, I went to a restaurant with him. I mentioned the fact that I was a Harvard man.

"I have a good friend out there — Dick Clarke. Know him?"

I most certainly did, as I had roomed with him the year previous. My host proved to be none other than Bert Ford, of the "Boston American," who, some years previous, had gained considerable fame by "showing up" "Joe" Knowles. After I had finished my meal, I went back to camp. On several occasions during the next month, I saw my friend again and had some very pleasant chats with him.

Labor Day was an eventful holiday for El

Paso and Camp Cotton. All drills and duties were suspended. The morning was devoted to games and athletic contests between the three Massachusetts regiments. The only event that was not a success was the mule-race; not one could be tempted to stray in the right direction — they scattered at top speed to all other parts of the camp. On that day I took one of the officers on a sight-seeing trip on my motorcycle.

Immediately after lunch, as we were driving through El Paso, we witnessed a scene which proved that riotous demonstrations were not limited to that territory south of the Rio Grande. For some time there had been trouble between the carmen and the railway company and a strike had been scheduled for Labor Day. A large crowd had formed a circle around a street-car which three or four strikers were systematically wrecking. The conductor was beaten nearly to death; the car itself was in a sorry state. The audience looked on appreciatively, cheering the rioters. Although the affair took place in the main square, at noon, not one of the several policemen who were on the

scene showed any interest whatever. I saw one guardian going at full speed in the opposite di soon a number of provost guards a armed with rifles. The strikers at o I have noticed on several occasions that whatever contempt the citizens of the Southwest may regard the soldier while he is off duty, they have the highest respect for him when he is under orders and are never reluctant to call for his services in times of trouble.

We drove through the country for a few hours and returned to El Paso. The officer left me for a few minutes to send a telegram, so I left the machine and walked down the street. An "M.P." came up to me and asked me what I was doing.

"Nothing," I replied innocently.

"You are under arrest."

It appeared that all soldiers had been ordered to their camps at one o'clock, on account of the strike. I explained that I was an orderly and, after interviewing the officer, the guard released me. We returned to camp and I went to my company street.

"You are under arrest," greeted me again.

"What for?" I enquired.

"Overstaying leave. Report to the lieutenant at once."

I then discovered that leave had been granted me only until noon. I explained that I had been detailed to an officer and was once more released from custody. That evening I had planned to attend a boxing-match, but was requested to drive to town again with an officer at nine o'clock. Permission had been granted by the first lieutenant, so at nine I drove to El Paso, returning immediately and intending to see the latter part of the bouts. I came into the street.

"Batchelder, you are under arrest."

Although my day's experiences had accustomed me to this announcement, I was slightly nettled. The sergeant said that the second lieutenant, upon seeing me leave camp, not knowing that I had permission, had ordered my arrest in quarters. The officer was nowhere to be found, so I was sent to my tent. As I could not leave it I was unable to attend reveille the next day, and slept blissfully during the

entire morning. At noon affairs were straightened out and I was once more at large.

September brought fine weather, and it seemed as if the "North Shore of Hell" were cooling off a little. The days were still warm, yet the heat was not excessive. The nights, however, were very cold, and toward four in the morning became uncomfortably so. It was now wholly undesirable to undress for the night. There was at once a clamor for extra blankets and sweaters. A requisition was made; the quartermaster's dépôt, after the usual delay of several weeks, forwarded an extra blanket for every man, but as the supply of sweaters was limited, the issue was sufficient for only half the company. (I have been told that at the same time the warriors of Plattsburg were allotted four blankets each.) Instead of retiring scantily clad in regulation underwear and wrapped in a blanket, the Guardsman now removed leggins and shoes only, donned a sweater (if he were the lucky possessor of one), put on several extra pairs of socks, wrapped himself in two blankets, with poncho and overcoat on top, and even then slept with some discomfort. No, Susie,

we did not wear our pyjamas and bed-slippers while we were waging peace on the Mexican border — not even once.

One private, noted for his strict views concerning sanitation, wore five pairs of woolen socks nightly. Each night he alternated the order, putting on one pair first to-night, another pair first the next night, and so on — until the entire quota had been soiled. Every five days he studiously washed his "sleeping-socks" and repeated the operation. Needless to say, he remained in perfect health — but so did everybody else. In the morning, when the mules were about to be packed, the mule-blankets were invariably missing. A hurried search was made; they were always found on the cots of some of the men. For if one could have three or even four blankets during the night, so much the better!

At the beginning of the month the authorities also decided that we were getting too much sleep. The hour of reveille was changed; instead of getting up at six, we now arose profanely in the twilight of five-fifteen. These extra minutes gave us much more time to water and feed the

animals, to police the street, and perform other duties. However, I can hardly say that the boon was appreciated.

September signalized the beginning of new troubles for us — flies and mosquitoes. Up to this time the number of these pests had been small. The latter made our nights miserable, filling the tents and buzzing continually around us. A few mosquito-nets were issued by the quartermaster, but there were not enough even for the non-coms. The rest of us had to content ourselves with covering the exposed parts of our bodies with our blankets while we slept. This method was not always satisfactory, as swollen hands and faces often testified.

The flies descended in swarms, like the historical insects of Egypt. Sleep in the afternoon was impossible; attracted by the dirty clothing and perspiring men, they filled the tents. I saw one man in the Ninth Regiment catch one hundred and nineteen flies in one sweep of the hand, during the evening. The kitchens were beclouded with the black insects; they could not be kept from the food. Conditions soon became so intolerable that wooden mess-shacks, of the

regulation construction, were ordered built. Lest any outside diversion take our minds from the task, passes to town were prohibited until the work should be completed.

Luckily, several of the boys were excellent carpenters. Each morning a detail was given them to carry lumber, saw boards, and act as general auxiliaries. After drill the entire company was set to work for the afternoon. In something like five days the shack was completed; to guard against possible floods it was raised a foot above the ground. Just as we were congratulating ourselves on the termination of this work, we were ordered to fill the floor of the shack with a foot of dirt. This had to be brought from a short distance in pails, pans, and pots. The work was slow and apparently endless, but another five days saw the shack completed. It was forty feet long and fifteen wide, divided into two sections, one for the kitchen, the other for the "dining-hall." The kitchen was well equipped with shelves and stands for the utensils; the stove had a brick foundation. In the main part of the shack were a long serving stand, — on which, at mess-time,

the food was placed, in large pans, — and tables and benches, one bench for each squad. The entire building was enclosed in wire netting to exclude flies and vermin.

As interest in baseball waned somewhat with the coming of autumn, boxing began to play an important part in the athletic programme of the Guardsmen. Nearly every regiment had a ringside where, on several nights each week, the "fighting stock" engaged in battles before an audience of several hundred devotees of the sport. The most spirited combats took place at the Ninth Regiment's ring. The scene was lighted by huge arc-lights. Officers of the regiment served as referees and judges. Nearly the entire Massachusetts contingent attended and cheered their favorites with wild enthusiasm. Besides the regular matches on the programme, there were often "spite bouts" — those delights to lovers of a real fight. If two soldiers in a company were continually wrangling, they were given the opportunity to settle their disputes for good and all at the next bouts. Needless to say, when in the ring they entered fully into the spirit of the affair, and

each did his best to make a knock-out for the entertainment of the spectators. Never were there such bouts as took place night after night on the border. There were no "deals" for gate-receipts; no prizes, save those of glory; fouling was unknown. Never shall I recall without a wistful sigh that eventful night at the Ninth, when out of nine bouts there were five clean knock-outs.

Every two weeks a grand series of bouts took place at the Arena of the Twenty-third Infantry, the proceeds going to the Soldiers' Benefit Fund. Admission prices were fifty cents, a dollar, and a dollar and a half. Ordinarily, to insure snappy, satisfactory boxing, the Guardsmen were opposed by the regulars. Crowds came from all over the city in motor-trucks. Large contingents of various States came *en masse* to cheer for their favorites, bringing their bands with them. The long bout, of twelve rounds, usually decided some championship of the army. Time and again the militiamen soundly whipped their "regular" opponents, much to their material satisfaction and financial gain. When all the Guardsmen left the

border, I imagine that they carried most of the championships with them.

Each Saturday morning drill was omitted and an inspection of equipment took place. These inspections were carried on with that wavering indecision so characteristic of the militia organizations. At seven o'clock the order comes down, "Inspection will be held at eight." A grand scramble follows — equipment must be properly laid out on the bunks, pistols and bolos cleaned, shoes shined, spotless uniforms put on, and all within an hour. Private Smith hurriedly changes his breeches and now wears his only clean pair. Suddenly he remembers that his pistol is dirty. He dives for the oil-can and rags, and in his haste spills oil on his immaculate breeches. He borrows a pair from his neighbor, puts them on, but has to change again when that neighbor finds that his laundry has not come and he must have them back.

At seven we had been told that the squad-bags, containing the surplus clothes of each member, need not be packed. At eight the company forms in the street. The first sergeant

reports to one of the officers, and is told that inspection will not be held until ten. This announcement is greeted by groans from those whose equipment is in perfect condition, by sighs of relief from those who are not properly prepared. At nine the tents are inspected by the first sergeant, who wishes to make a good showing before the officers. The first squad have laid their equipment on the bunks according to one system; the second and third have made a different lay-out; while the preparations of the fourth are absolutely unlike those of the other three. The regulation book is called upon to settle the difficulty. The correct method is determined; as all bunks were wrongly arranged, all must be changed.

At quarter of ten we are informed that blanket-rolls must be carried, as the inspection will be held in the street. All our preparations have been useless. We remove our equipment from the bunks and make up our blanket-rolls and pack our haversacks. Suddenly, "As you were." Blanket-rolls need not be made up. We undo them indignantly and place the articles again on the bunks.

Ten o'clock: "There will be no inspection in the street. The equipment will be inspected in the tents."

The officers begin their task. In the second tent Private Jones has placed all his belongings on his bunk. As this is the first inspection, the squad corporal quite naturally has misinterpreted the ambiguous order and advised him to do so. The officer comes to Jones's bunk and tries unsuccessfully to hide a smile. The man's equipment is in perfect condition; all accouterments are properly placed. But at one end of the bunk he has deposited all his worldly possessions in neat piles. There are socks of every variety, from thick wool to silk; a necktie sent by an admirer; a box of poker-chips; three packs of cards; an ill-concealed pint of "Old Crow"; infinite tobacco and cigarettes; tooth-paste, toilet-water, and all the other necessities of the boudoir; magazines; books; and a pile of Mexican knick-knacks which he has accumulated.

The officer checks the government property, and adds seriously, "The next time, Jones, I think it will hardly be necessary to offer this —

er — display for inspection. But sometime, just consider how you would carry it, if we were to go to Mexico."

Jones blushes, and inwardly cursing the corporal who was the cause of his action, methodically stows his valuables in his trunk.

The officer goes on to the next tent.

"Walters, extra duty — no towel."

The orderly writes something in his little book, while the resigned victim stares vacantly, forming mental pictures of the trials to come.

"Black, where 's your comb?"

Black points to his head, which, recently shaved, shines like a billiard-ball. "Don't need one, sir."

"No excuse. Must have a comb. Regulations say so. Black, extra duty — no comb," — to the orderly.

It is eleven-thirty and the inspection is over. Sighs of relief come from every tent.

"Gee! I'm glad he did n't notice my pants," murmurs Smith, of the oily breeches, as, now safe from the scrutinizing eye of the inspecting officer, he saunters toward the canteen.

During the first fortnight of September, the Government began to take extraordinary interest in its Guardsman protégés. Federal inspections under the direct supervision of army officers were held several times a week. They embraced everything: equipment, maneuvers, practical and theoretical knowledge of machine gunnery, and technical tests with the guns themselves.

On one particular morning an extremely important general inspection is held. We have been coached for this event for some time. The company marches to the drill-field; the inspecting officer, a captain from a "regular" machine-gun company, follows later with our officers. The guns are removed from their cases and placed on coronas in front of the squads. Everything goes on in snappy, characteristic, army fashion.

"Here, you," — pointing to a man in the first squad, — "take the gun down."

"This man," — in the next squad, — "change firing-pin."

One man from each squad is given a task. We know our gun very well, so everything goes

finely. Then, picking out four more men, "Take these flags; wigwag messages given you."

Four others are chosen and placed in various parts of the field. The officer gives a message to one, who relays it to the next man. The fourth delivers it back to the captain.

The first man receives the message: "Four companies, enemy, behind woods 2400 yards south of village. Await reinforcements, then advance, take position at point marked 'Cherry Hill,' on map."

The second man receives it without difficulty, but transmits it hurriedly to the next.

"What's that after 'reinforcements'?" asks number three.

"No repeating. Hurry on with message," he is warned.

Finally the message comes to headquarters again. It now is: "Four companies infantry in woods 3400 yards south of village; after reinforcements advance to position; Cherry Hill not on map."

"Hum," remarks the officer. "Try another."

Next comes a test of range-finding ability without instruments. A man is selected at random from each squad.

"How far is that water-tower, the second one beyond that tree? First man."

"Eight hundred yards."

"Next?"

"Twelve hundred."

The last two chance six hundred and nine hundred.

"How far are those stock-yards? Quick."

"Four hundred"; "One hundred and fifty"; "Six hundred"; "Two hundred."

"How high is the wireless station?" (It is about three miles away.)

"Ninety yards — I mean, feet"; "One hundred and fifty"; "Two hundred"; "Three hundred."

After this is done, he gives us the true distances. Some of our answers must have been disconcerting.

Now comes the test for non-coms.

"You come here," says the inspector, pointing out a corporal. "Lead that mule here" — to one of the mule-leaders.

"Now, corporal, what have you here?" He waves his hand toward the packed animal.

"One Benet-Mercier machine-gun. Six —"

"One automatic machine-rifle," corrects the Captain gently.

"Six cases of ammunition, one pack."

"Now, start over again. What is holding this off the ground?"

"The mule."

"Ah, yes, the mule. Never forget the mule, corporal. And how about those articles under the pack?"

"The blanket and corona."

"Now, name the parts of the pack."

"*Aparejo*, crupper, cinch —"

"Just a minute, corporal. What does *aparejo* mean?" This is evidently his pet question.

The corporal does not know, but is sure it is a Spanish word. Then the quiz goes on.

After two hours of such cross-examination, we are marched back to camp. Our Captain comes forward and says: "The inspecting officer has just complimented me on your showing. I know you will be pleased to hear it. Dismissed."

"Gee!" says a private, as he takes off his side-arms, "that old boy must have been human, after all. From the way he talked, I thought we were rotten for fair."

The brigade march, in which all the Massachusetts troops took part, occurred on September 13. It was a test of the strength and endurance of the men after they had undergone nearly three months of active training. The route covered ten miles; heavy marching orders, such as would be necessary under real campaign conditions, were prescribed. Our equipment weighed about fifty pounds. Unlike the infantry companies, we carried no rifles. The entire equipment of the machine-gun private on the march comprises the following, exclusive of the uniform:—

1 pair of suspenders.
1 roundabout, on which are suspended:—
  1 bolo, and bolo scabbard.
  1 Colt .45 automatic, and holster.
  1 first-aid pouch, containing first-aid packet.
  1 canteen-cover, and canteen filled with water.
  1 clip-case, containing two revolver clips, each loaded with seven cartridges.

FIVE MINUTES' HALT

THE BRIGADE MARCH

1 haversack, in which the following are carried: —
Mess-kit and cup.
Surplus revolver ammunition.
Toothbrush.
Comb.
Soap.
One day's rations (½ box hard tack and ½ can beef).
Any personal belongings of the men.

The blanket-roll, thrown over the right shoulder comprises: —
1 pair of roll-straps.
1 shelter-half (½ of pup-tent) and rope.
1 poncho, or military raincoat.
1 blanket.
5 wooden or metal tent-pins.
1 tent-pole.
1 suit of underwear.
2 pairs of socks.
1 towel.
(In winter, extra blankets and sweater would be included.)

The surplus-kit bag, or "squad-bag," carried by the wagons or trucks, contained the following clothing for each member of the squad: —

1 pair of shoes (broken in and ready for service).
2 pairs of socks (inserted in toes of shoes).
1 pair of breeches.

1 shirt, O.D.
1 suit of underwear.
1 pair of shoestrings.

After the socks have been inserted, the shoes are tied together with shoestring. Next a compact roll is made of the breeches, shirt and underwear; this is tied to the shoes by another shoestring, inscribed with the owner's name and packed in the large bag.

By carefully considering the first list, one can see that the burden of the soldier on the march is no light one.

We started on the march that morning at the usual hour of seven-thirty. Unfortunately, as the previous day had been pay-day, some of the men were not in the best of condition as a result of their monthly celebration. Before we reached the limits of the camp, we passed several men who slept soundly at the side of the road. These wayfarers were at once hustled into the ambulance which was directly before us. As we branched into the highway, we could see a long, endless line of khaki figures.

There were about thirty-five hundred men on the hike, so progress was not so smooth as usual.

Each hour, in accordance with the regulations, we halted for ten minutes, retiring to the right of the road. Rolls were thrown off and used for cushions. After the first hour, the strain of the march began to tell on some of the men, who left the ranks and lay down on their rolls, some in the road itself, others beneath the shade of a near-by tree. The ambulances came along and the members of the Medical Corps revived the unfortunates, and assisted them to the seats. As we came to a large field, five miles from camp, the column was reviewed by our brigade commander, General Sweetser, and his staff. We then halted for fifteen minutes and started on the way home.

As we were not expected to arrive until late in the afternoon, rations had been given us. All the while I had been keenly anticipating the toothsomeness of a cake of milk chocolate which I had brought with me to supplement my rations. When a halt was made at noon, I opened my haversack and searched in vain for the chocolate. Finally, I found it, but it no longer resembled a cake of chocolate: it had melted and had assumed the consistency of syrup

which covered the bottom of the haversack. I disdainfully refused the offer of an unsympathetic comrade to get me a cup that I might enjoy my delicacy.

We resumed our march and arrived at camp shortly after one o'clock. Although the heat was terrific, there had been little dust, and the men were in comparatively good shape. Not many had been compelled to fall out; on the whole, our performance was quite creditable. The Machine-Gun Company had a clean record; all the men returned in fine condition. We were dismissed upon our arrival, and all sought the friendly shade of the tents. As usual, however, we were drenched with perspiration. One of the boys reached for a cigarette-box which he had carried in his blouse-pocket. The box was of pasteboard and he found that the sweat had saturated it completely, causing the paper of the cigarettes to unroll, and so leaving a compact and soaked mass of tobacco in the now dilapidated box. And yet, as I have said, September was a comparatively cool month.

CHAPTER X

AL FRESCO WITH REAL MEXICANS

One day, when a college friend and I were idling uptown, we met two Mexicans, obviously of the higher class, one a graduate of Pennsylvania University, the other of an Illinois college. Being Harvard men ourselves, we struck up an acquaintance with them at once and found them extremely open-minded and congenial. We took dinner with them, and before we left received an urgent invitation to attend a picnic, to be given by some Mexican refugees on the following Sunday, in honor of Diaz's birthday. We accepted with alacrity, for the novel prospect attracted us greatly, and, it must be confessed, we were very anxious to meet an "honest-to-goodness" *señorita*, of whom we had read so much and seen so little. The invitation also embraced any of our friends whom we might like to bring with us.

When Sunday came, I was allowed an all-day pass, but for some reason my friend was refused. However, two other men decided to accompany

me. We started at ten, I on my motor-cycle, the others following in an automobile. The scene of the picnic was a ranch, fifteen miles from El Paso.

At noon, after experiencing some difficulty with bad roads, I arrived at the Cueto Ranch. I drove into the grounds, parked my car, and looked in vain for my recently acquired friend. A Mexican gentleman, seeing me, offered me his hand and in perfect English extended a cordial welcome, despite the fact that I was in the United States uniform and that I had not mentioned the name of my sponsor. I inquired if Dr. Molinar were there.

"No, he is not here yet, but don't wait for him. Come with me and I shall be glad to introduce you. But first come and try some good Mexican beer, and then you must meet some of the young ladies."

I must confess that I was somewhat bewildered. I thought for the moment of the very different reception I probably should get, if I appeared unannounced, a perfect stranger, at a similar function given by Texans.

We walked around to the *patio* of the ranch

and I caught my first glimpse of a Mexican party. Under a grove of fine, old trees, I saw a number of people dancing. Soft, languorous music, of a kind I had never heard before, was rendered by a Mexican orchestra at the farther end of the court. Groups of men, clad in neat white suits, were chatting sociably over their cigars. The matrons, dressed in bright gowns of harmonious colors, were seated comfortably in chairs around the outdoor dancing pavilion. From tree to tree there hung festoons of multi-colored ribbons; Mexican and American flags were everywhere in evidence. In a wing of the one-story, adobe ranch-house servants in white coats were busy opening bottles and distributing drinks to the guests.

It seemed all so strange — as though I were in a foreign land. I was then the only American present in the entire assemblage. My new acquaintance must have seen my glances of inquiry, for he explained: "We don't often have a chance to meet like this, but when we do, we try to forget our troubles and enjoy ourselves. Nearly all you see here are refugees from Mexico because of the present Government. Under

the Diaz Administration, all were wealthy and happy; many were of great political importance and of military rank. But come, you must join us."

I now saw my two soldier friends entering the grounds. I introduced them to my acquaintance, who in turn introduced us to the assemblage. The ladies treated us with great courtesy, the men with extreme cordiality. All were very refined and well educated; the majority spoke excellent English. They were entirely different from the surly, villainous peons whom I had hitherto seen as the only representatives of the Mexican people. The men were distinguished-looking, with their erect carriage and superb mustaches. The matrons, although somewhat inclined toward stoutness, were undeniably handsome. The young ladies — the *señoritas* — were very beautiful; jet-black hair and large, dark eyes blended perfectly with a pale-olive skin, and they had complexions that would be the envy of many American girls.

My friend, the doctor, arrived shortly and did all he could to make us feel at home. From time to time he pointed out personages

who were formerly distinguished in Mexican affairs.

"You see that man over there? Ten years ago he was the richest cattle-owner in the world."

"And now?" I suggested.

"Oh, he still has a large fortune here in the States. All the wealthy men have their money in this country. It 's much safer," he added.

"That young fellow was a major under Huerta. Since the fall of his chief, he has been studying in Paris. The young lady with whom he is dancing is Señorita Angeles. Her father is General Angeles, Villa's chief artilleryman. Would you like to dance with her?"

"It would be a great pleasure."

We were introduced and I had the next dance with Señorita Angeles. So far as I could see, this charming young lady had none of the characteristics popularly attributed to her father's chief. I carefully avoided politics; we discussed topics of general interest: social events, Texas in general, and El Paso in particular. She spoke good English with a very slight foreign accent.

At two o'clock luncheon was announced and we all flocked to the long tables, set out under the trees, prettily decorated with tiny flags and ribbons. An exquisite meal was served — sandwiches and many dainty dishes with which I was unfamiliar. I was much relieved to find that the customary *pimienta* had been omitted. The band followed us and played continually gay, happy tunes. As the meal ended, it played the Mexican national anthem. All stood and sang; they seemed very serious for a moment. Then came the toast "Viva Mexico," and we returned to the dancing.

At four o'clock the dancing stopped for a short time and the children played games. From the trees were suspended earthen bowls, gayly decorated with ribbons — *piñatas*, they were called. The children were blindfolded and armed with long poles, with which they struck out at the *piñatas*, and one by one, succeeded in breaking them, so releasing a shower of candy and little favors of various kinds. They enjoyed this hugely, while the elders stood by and shook with laughter. The party broke up at five o'clock and the guests departed for El Paso.

THE PICNIC

Before I left, I had accepted several invitations to call on some of my new friends. They seemed to realize that I was far from home and that such a diversion would be welcome. I later took advantage of some of these invitations and was very kindly treated. Upon several occasions I ventured to broach the subject of politics and international complexities, as I was keenly desirous of obtaining the Mexican point-of-view — that of the educated class.

"What do you think of Americans?" I boldly asked a young lady.

"I don't like those who live in this part of the country," she admitted frankly. "They are terribly narrow-minded. But I have met a number of people from the East, and if they are typical Americans, I like them very much. They do not sneer at us merely because we are Mexicans."

"Would you like to have us invade your country, and put an end to all this trouble?"

"No. I am exiled now and cannot return. But still, it is my country and I love it."

"But it would be a great thing to turn Mexico into a prosperous land, fill it with schools,

educate the peons so that they would no longer like war. Look at Cuba, for example. Don't you think we did well there?"

"No doubt; but Cuba was always a colony; Mexico is a free country. And I do not think that your people would go to all that trouble for nothing. They would keep the land they conquered. My country would not be Mexico then; it would be America. I should prefer to have America take part of Mexico for themselves, but leave us something that we can call our own land."

"But what about the wholesale murder of Americans? Do you think that is right?"

"No; we are all very sorry for present conditions. But what can you expect? The peons kill Americans because they have done it before and nothing happened. *If your Government had recognized Huerta, there would have been no more murders.* He would have stopped them. He was bad, but he was strong and knew how to rule by force. Carranza is much weaker and much worse, yet your Government recognized him as President, and *he gets from the United States the ammunition with which he kills your people.*"

What could I answer to this. Every word was true — only too true.

"Whom would you like to see President now?"

"I don't know," she answered hopelessly; "there is no one. We are all looking forward to another Diaz. Some day he will come and Mexico will be happy once more."

It was intensely interesting to learn these things — to know what the real upper-class Mexican thinks of the situation.

As I was about to leave the ranch for El Paso, I discovered that I had mislaid my camera. I approached one of the servants, a peon woman, on the subject, but she could not speak English. I tried the French word for "camera." I placed the accent on each syllable in the hope of suggesting the Spanish equivalent. It was of no use. Finally, I attempted to simulate the movements of a person taking a picture. Suddenly the woman beamed, said, "Si, señor," several times, and disappeared into a closet. In a moment she appeared with an antique, double-barreled shot-gun. Smiling, I shook my head, and assured her in perfect English that I had

absolutely no murderous intentions. I found the camera in my motor-cycle.

While I was driving slowly toward El Paso, I was overtaken and passed by a big touring-car. As it shot by, its American driver shouted, "Hey, do you want the whole damned road?" Contrasting so violently, as it did, with the courteous treatment I had received throughout the day, this coarse greeting set me thinking. Why is it that these aliens, against whose race my comrades are fighting, to whom my political and social ideas are unalterably obnoxious, regard me as a friend and as a fit associate, while my own countrymen are disdainful, and look upon the uniform as something to be avoided? And again, is there any other country whose soldiers receive better treatment from foreigners than they receive from their own people? It was not pleasant to ponder these thoughts; I opened the throttle and rode swiftly into El Paso.

CHAPTER XI

"THE KING OF FRANCE WITH TWICE TEN THOUSAND MEN"

A MONSTER military parade was planned for September 19. Thirty-five thousand men, hundreds of baggage-wagons, trucks, and ambulances, made up the largest military column seen within the United States since the Civil War, and the longest ever formed in times of peace. All the Guardsmen in El Paso took part; also many organizations of the regular army. To many of the uninitiated a parade seems to be a wonderful occasion, an event in which it must be glorious to take part. I had personally cherished this idea, but I was early disillusioned.

On the morning of the parade, we were awakened an hour earlier than usual, in order to put our equipment into the best of shape and properly to pack the animals. We left the camp shortly before seven and marched to the city. At eight, the column began its long march. My regiment was one of the first to start, following the Twenty-third U.S. Infantry. The city was

gayly decorated with flags and banners; in an outburst of civic pride the mayor had declared a holiday. On account of the early hour the streets were not yet crowded; the people exhibited some enthusiasm, but for the most part were wrapped in their usual unconcern. We passed through the center of the city, and turned up Montana Street, a beautiful, wide thoroughfare, some three miles in length. An hour's march brought us into the road leading to Fort Bliss. At eleven o'clock, just as we came in sight of the fort, a long halt for mess was made. We ate our rations, consisting of two sandwiches, and, a thing which we later regretted, we nearly emptied our canteens. We entered the fort shortly after noon, and marched around the lower extremity of its precincts. From this point we had a view of several miles of the parade route; we could see an endless column of men, animals, and wagons, those at the foot of the hill moving swiftly along the road, those several miles away resembling a long, motionless ribbon, stretched out on a pure white surface. As we approached the reviewing-stand the regimental band took

PAST THE REVIEWING STAND

AN OHIO COMPANY

its position on the farther side of the road. We went past and caught glimpses of General Bell, General Morton, and other military notables.

Contrary to our hopes and expectations, we were forced to remain at the fort until the entire parade had finished. We took our places on a long, dusty plain, unpacked the mules, and looked forward eagerly to the termination of the long, monotonous hours of waiting. As each regiment approached the plain, it raised a thick cloud of stifling, hot dust. The intolerably hot breeze wafted this over us, covering everything with a thick coating and adding greatly to the discomfort produced by the glaring sun. As many canteens were empty, crowds left the temporary encampment to search for water. For some reason the faucets at the cavalry camp had been shut off. Thousands of men, with throats parched and filled with dust, flocked there with canteens, only to be disappointed. At length the situation became unbearable, so the men drove the horses from the stable-tanks, and plunged their faces into the dirty, lukewarm water. Crowds followed their example, washed themselves, and then filled

their canteens with the same water. Within an hour over twenty large tanks were emptied. Although I was very thirsty, I did not relish the prospect of the tanks, so I walked for a half-mile and found a faucet of good water at an iron-foundry. I filled my own canteen and six others belonging to my companions and bore them triumphantly to the plain.

By four o'clock the field was one solid mass of men and animals. The rifles were stacked in front of the companies, the blanket-rolls strewn everywhere on the ground. I climbed on an ambulance to gain a better view. As far as I could see — it seemed miles and miles! — there was one solid mass of khaki figures. And the declining sun, shining dimly through the thick screen of dust, gave the field a most curious appearance. Here are over thirty thousand men, I thought, an army one third the size of the regular army of the United States. Yet on the battle-fields of Europe, within twenty-four hours, a multitude of equal size has been, time and again, absolutely annihilated — wiped from the face of the earth. It seemed incredible.

Shortly after four the entire column had

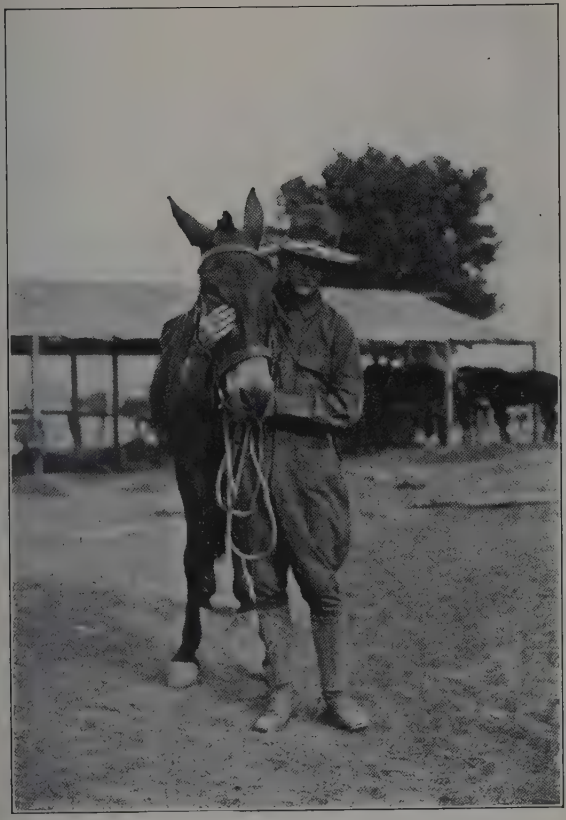
THE SEA OF MEN

THE PARADE HALTS

passed; we received the orders to return home. We packed the mules and were on the point of starting when one of the beasts, no doubt considering that his behavior had hitherto been too decorous, gave a leap and started for parts unknown. Unfortunately, in the course of his flight he dashed against Edwards, of our company; the corner of an ammunition-box, packed on the mule, struck Edwards in the back and he fell unconscious. He was carried to the ambulance on a stretcher and, as his injury was serious, he was in the hospital a long time. Poor Eddie! From the time of his departure from Boston, he had been continually followed by a tenacious jinx which heaped disaster after disaster upon him. Seven o'clock found us back in camp, after a march of fifteen miles and an afternoon in the hot sun. Parades are by no means occasions of delight to the soldier.

It was after this march that I received the dubious honor of an appointment as mule-leader. The name of the object which I was destined to drag behind me for several hundred miles was "Al," named after a member of our squad. Ordinarily, I am very fond of animals;

I thought it well to be on good terms with my protégé, so I fed him sugar and gave him plenty of oats and water. But it was of no use. Al did not take kindly to me; I doubt if he ever had a strong affection for any of us. No amount of friendly bribery or persuasion could tempt him to do anything against his will. If, in feeding him, I ventured within the "dead-line" of his heels, I immediately received a hearty kick. When I untied him to lead him to water, he broke loose, forced his way to the tank, and created a stampede among the earlier arrivals. On the march, he would behave quietly for a time, then would make a dash for some unknown goal, dragging me with him. When I discovered that persuasion was useless, I tried force. Where a friendly pat would cause him to behave badly, a well-directed kick was astonishingly effective. And so, we compromised. Al understood perfectly that so long as he remained docile, he would be treated as a gentlemanly mule deserved to be treated, so his wildness diminished to some extent. Immediately before leaving for Massachusetts, I went to the corral to bid farewell to my mule. I gave him a



"ME 'N' AL"

friendly pat or two, told him he was rather a good old boy after all, when — *biff!* — his left foot made a vicious jab in my direction. I left him disgustedly; I firmly believe that, if there be a hereafter for mules, Al will spend the eternity of his spiritual existence in that section where the fires rage hottest.

On September 25, we again had a celebration in our company. An election took place in the afternoon: Lieutenant Pond was confirmed as first lieutenant, Sergeant Henderson as second lieutenant. In the evening the flowing bowl and plates of food again adorned the cook-shack. The two officers very graciously "mixed in," served the punch, passed the food, and bade every one enjoy himself. As the hours advanced, various members of the company delivered more or less decorous songs, with the benches for a stage; they also gave unusual exhibitions of dancing. Upon this occasion not even the ice was left in the punch-bowl; some one carried that away with him.

For a few days we were placed under the direct supervision of a machine-gun officer of the army. He detached us from the infantry

and held special maneuvers, in which we coöperated with other machine-gun outfits. These operations took us beyond Kern Place, a residential suburb of the city. A large area of hilly, thickly wooded territory made an ideal scene for such work. The combined forces were divided into attacking and defensive parties; in this way more realism was furnished by the war game. The difficulties into which we quite innocently wandered were numerous. One morning we had remained under cover for about an hour; the orders came to take position on a certain crest, a short distance off. To gain this point we marched along a path that ran through a gully for a distance and then mounted a hill. We had begun the ascent, when we saw a machine gun staring from the top. We turned to the right — another gun; at our left we were similarly outflanked.

"You are all dead," shouted the umpire.

We retired with more or less happiness. We might all be dead, but there was not time enough for another maneuver, and a return to camp was certain.

On another occasion a corporal had shown

himself above the sky-line and was at once informed that he was dead. He picked a soft spot in the shade and promptly went to sleep. Soon an officer came up.

"What are you doing?" he asked, arousing the sleeper.

"I'm dead, sir," the latter announced.

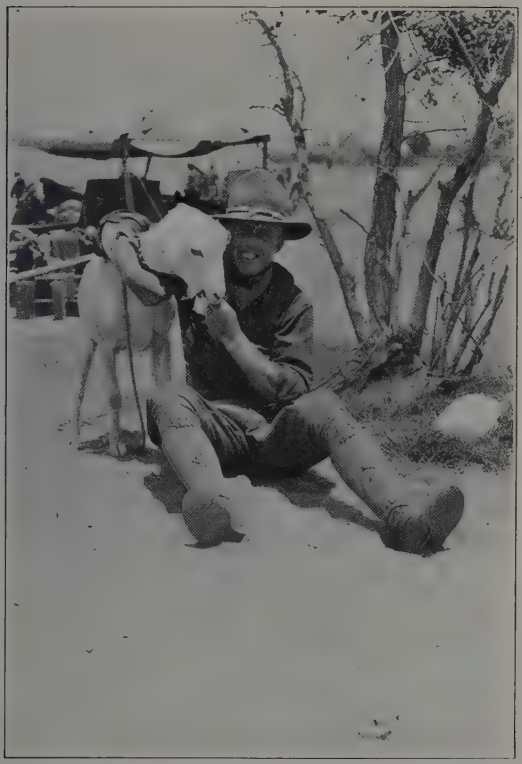
"That's too easy. Get up and join your squad."

"Good-night!" murmured the corpse, as the officer passed beyond hearing distance. "In this country, they won't even let a dead man sleep."

From time to time the number of mascots in the camp increased. They were of every variety and species. Of dogs there was an infinite number. Some of the companies had goats, burros, and pigs, while the individual members usually contented themselves with dogs, horned toads, and lizards. Vendors of sad-eyed puppies thronged the camp; at the local pound any dog might be obtained for fifty cents. As my first purchase, Benny, had not been a success, I determined to procure another animal. (Al could scarcely be called a mascot; he was a

token of hard luck.) So I bought a tiny dog. This one was a Mexican hairless which had been imported from Juarez. He was about three months old, with absolutely no hair to hide his blotched, elephant-like skin; his large, drooping ears and continually weeping eyes made him a picture of dejection and unhappiness. I called him "General Obregon." The General was by no means beautiful, but still — he was a dog, and that was the chief consideration. He slept all day in the warm sun, but evidently suffered from the cold nights, in spite of the army socks and other clothing in which I wrapped him. A week after I had adopted him, I was called away on the long hike. Although I received promises that he should be well cared for, I discovered upon my return that he had not been fed, and, not being a soldier, had died. I was very sorry to lose the little fellow, but perhaps it was just as well. I doubt if the General would have been smiled upon in the streets of my home town — his appearance was against him.

My comrades also had hard luck with their mascots. The horned toads died regularly; the



BILLY, OF THE MASCOT ARMY

lizards escaped (even when their tails had been amputated to prevent flight); one dog was smothered under a sack of potatoes; another was refused transportation to Boston. The only survivor of the company's mascot army was Murphy, who belonged to Gus, the cook. Murphy arrived in Cambridge in the best of condition, thanks to his summer diet of raw meat. He now comes to drill every Wednesday night. Drop around some evening and Gus will introduce you, but wear your old clothes, as Murphy is very partial to all save the uniform.

CHAPTER XII

THE GREAT HIKE

THE hardest and most trying days of our border service were those at the beginning of October. We had been inspected and inspected, and had maneuvered so consistently that there was no necessity for continuing. The harassed authorities of the Southern Department shook their heads dubiously and asked, "What can we do with the Guardsmen?" for Washington had not yet seen fit to send us home. Finally the idea presented itself — "Send them for a long campaign march." And so the orders reached camp for the Massachusetts brigade, in conjunction with Guardsmen of other States, to set out October 1 on a fourteen-day march. The preceding night all our personal belongings and surplus equipment were packed in the cook-shack. The tents were not struck, as they would not be needed during the trip. I conceived the idea that a motor-cycle orderly would not be amiss, so I offered the suggestion to the authorities. No, certainly not. Private

Batchelder might not take his motor-cycle with him. And so Private Batchelder walked.

At seven-thirty on a Sunday morning we left Camp Cotton, our destination being Fort Selden, sixty miles distant, beyond Las Cruces, New Mexico. The weather was perfect, and the much-dreaded sun had not commenced its daily career of frightfulness. As we marched through the city and took the road that led toward the smelter, the band played spirited pieces; the fife and drum corps shrilled the old marching songs of the Civil War; every one sang and was in good spirits. There were eighteen thousand of us, men from Massachusetts, Ohio, Kentucky, Michigan, and South Carolina; infantry, cavalry, signal and medical corps. As the morning progressed, the sun gradually grew hotter, until finally it became the usual ball of fire. Soon after leaving the smelter, we branched off into a strip of desert, as the roads were under repair. Heavy clouds of fine dust arose beneath the feet of the marching thousands; the tiny alkaline particles penetrated deep into the throat, irritated the sensitive membranes, and dried the tongue and

mouth. Our canteens had become quite hot; the lukewarm water afforded only momentary relief. It had to be drunk again and again. At noon we crossed the tracks of the Santa Fé, halted, and were ordered to pitch camp. The Massachusetts brigade led the column; the others occupied positions in the rear.

In accordance with the inviolable rule of the army, that animals must be cared for before the men themselves, the mule-leaders were ordered to take their mules to water.

"Where?" Water was nowhere to be seen.

"The river is right behind us. Take them there."

After Al was unpacked, I led him along a path that supposedly approached the Rio Grande. For three quarters of an hour we walked through dense walls of high brush. My face and hands were scratched, and the hot sun and my empty canteen added to my discomfort. From time to time I met men on horseback. Yes, the river was in front, all right. How far? About a mile. Always "about a mile." We seemed to make no headway at all. Several other boys were following me with their

"ACTION FRONT"

THE SUPPLY WAGONS

animals. Suddenly, one of the mules gave a leap and started out for the river alone.

Al was peaceful enough; he seemed half asleep, so I had the halter-rope twisted about my wrist, and was paying little attention to him. As the rebel dashed by us, he gave Al a slight push; I saw the mule's eyes roll wickedly, then I felt myself flying through space. When I landed, I was on a very unpleasant variety of cactus (parts of which I carried in my skin for days afterwards), with a sore wrist and a very sore body. I moved away from the cactus and went to sleep under a shady bush, fervently praying that Al would not stop until he reached South America. In a short time I was awakened by Lieutenant Henderson, to whom I explained my difficulty. He relieved me of my side-arms and offered to let me take his horse back to camp. It seemed that Al had been intercepted by the stable sergeant and was again in captivity. I walked slowly along the path and in an hour reached my company again.

The site of the encampment was a typical stretch of Texas desert, its dry, dusty surface covered with occasional cacti and thick clumps

of mesquite bushes. The ground was somewhat uneven and very sandy, so the pitching of the pup-tents was difficult. The tent-pins were driven, but they soon loosened and came up altogether.

A "pup-tent" is a small shelter for two men, consisting of two halves, — one carried by each man, — ten pins, and two tent-poles. When orders are given to pitch tents, each man selects a "bunk-mate" from his squad. The pair then undo their blanket-rolls, button the shelter halves together, place the poles and drive the pins. Then the blanket and poncho are spread on the ground inside the tent; side-arms are hung on the forward tent-pole. The entire process takes ordinarily three minutes. However, these tents are by no means satisfactory to their occupants. The slightest movement of the sleeper will cause the entire structure to collapse. The tent-pins are of small use except in hard ground, as they are too easily uprooted. A heavy rain, as we discovered later to our sorrow, quickly penetrates the thin canvas; after it has become somewhat worn, it leaks abominably.

The afternoon was spent in search for water, since, as usual, none was supplied at the camp until later in the day. Thousands filled their canteens in the dirty river, even though a walk of five miles was necessary to do it. On the opposite side of the regimental street, however, the officers' bar was in good running order. It was not without envy that we heard the clinking of chipped ice in the glasses and the popping of the beer-bottles.

As soon as I had recovered from my encounter with Al, I took my canteen and started for the river again, as I had had nothing to drink since morning. About half-way to the river, I discovered a small farm, evidently owned by Mexicans. In the barnyard there was a well around which a group of Guardsmen had clustered. One man was pulling up an old, battered, tin bucket, covered with rust. His fellows drank eagerly and then filled their canteens. I looked down into the well and saw a pool of yellowish water, its surface covered with slime.

"It's horrible stuff — alkali," said one man, breathless from several long draughts. "But then," he added, grinning, "it's wet."

When my turn at the bucket came, I found that my friend had spoken correctly. The water was bitter and brackish; it tasted abominably — but there was no denying that it was wet. Then I filled my canteen and went on toward the river. I found several hundred soldiers already splashing joyfully in the cool, swift waters. I undressed quickly and plunged in. The water was only about three feet deep and the current was so rapid that one could not swim against it. At that particular spot there were two Ohio men and two others from Massachusetts. We at once made acquaintance, talked over affairs at camp, and reminisced pleasantly.

"When I was home," volunteered one, "the old man used to pull me out of bed at 7 A.M. I used to think it was fierce, but let me get back there again and I'll stay up all night for him."

"I worked on a farm in Ohio," another broke in. "Five G.M. every morning found me with the milk-pail on my arm. I thought that was a rotten life, but oh! just lead me back to those cows and chickens. I'm cured already."

I had a fine swim, or rather a bath, for I had

providentially brought soap with me. After I had finished my personal toilet, I carried my underclothes and socks, already drenched with perspiration, into the river, rinsed them thoroughly, and hung them on a bush to dry. Then the five of us lay on the bank, basking in the sun, which did not now seem so hot, lit our pipes, and enjoyed a pleasant half-hour.

Finally I dressed and made my way back to camp. I found that a small quantity of water had arrived, just enough to make one cup of coffee and a mess-kit full of stew for each man. The coffee contained no milk; the stew was poor, but how good it tasted! We moistened our hard-tack in the "slum," ate as much as we could obtain, and felt much more comfortable and satisfied. Soon it grew dark, and hundreds of camp-fires were lighted. The dry bushes needed only a match to transform them into blazing beacons. And as the stars came out and the cool of the evening refreshed us, all were happy and content. For miles, the crackling fires of the soldiers lit up the sky. The men gathered in groups and sang the old campaign songs of their grandfathers. It was with this

for a setting that I rolled myself up in my blanket, and, since I detested the pup-tent, went to sleep under the clear sky.

The next morning we had only a short march, covering about three miles. One hour before noon we encamped near the Borderland Inn, a sizable road-house, situated a quarter of a mile from the river. We were delighted with the prospect of obtaining some real food once more, but we soon discovered that guards had been placed outside the bar and restaurant and that only officers might enter. For the rest of the day a visitor at the camp might have seen enlisted men running wildly about and heard the cry, "My kingdom for a bottle of beer." The absolute lack of water did not prove to be so great a privation as on the preceding day, for we had arrived at camp before the heat got to be excessive. In the afternoon vendors of fruit, crackers, and a liquid called "orangeade" crowded the road below the camp. One patriotic citizen amassed a fortune by selling to thirsty soldiers water, in which an orange peel had evidently been temporarily immersed, at *fifteen cents the canteen-full*. In the late after-

noon, as I was watering Al for the second time, I noticed a large number of soldiers in a field near the river. I asked one who came out with his blouse bulging, what they were doing.

"Watermelons," he cried.

That one word was enough. I dragged the protesting Al to the fence and tied him; then I entered upon the scene of loot. The watermelons were small, about the size of a canteloupe, but of excellent flavor. Men were not content with one, as it made only a mouthful, but filled their blouses and arms with the delicacy. As the number of men was constantly increasing, I gathered five or six melons hastily, tucked them in my blouse, and returned to the thankless task of watering Al. As I came up from the river, guards were unsuccessfully attempting to clear the watermelon patch of its marauders. Soon an entire company arrived and with bared sabers compelled them to vacate. The number of watermelons that remained after the raid was negligible.

I returned to camp.

"What you got, Batch?" came from every side.

I said nothing, but retired into the seclusion of my pup-tent. Finally the secret was out.

"Remember that jam I gave you yesterday?"

"How would you like an apple and some crackers for a watermelon?"

I admitted that I was interested and appeared once more with all but two of my prizes. When the booty was distributed, I was richer by one drink of water, some much-prized crackers, an apple, and the good-will of my hungry corporal. Then I again retired and, regardless of all laws of digestion, devoured rapaciously the two remaining watermelons, the crackers, and the apple.

At first we considered our camp-ground to be a fortunate location, but we soon discovered that actually, as well as proverbially, roses have their thorns. In every square foot of the ground were scores of tiny burrs, the offspring of neighboring cacti. Our blankets were covered with the burrs; all parts of our bodies became embedded with spines, which itched and irritated the skin intolerably. They entered our uniforms and then worked into the flesh. For weeks afterwards a prickly sensation, as we

wrapped our blankets around us, was the reminder of our stop at the Borderland Inn.

On the third day we did not leave camp until noon, although we were packed at seven o'clock; the sections in our rear began the march, so we were the last to start. This was undoubtedly the hardest day of our trip. The sun had already assumed its domination of the country; its glare on the now burning sands was intense; its heat, overpowering. As we progressed, we left the paved highway, and passed over a sandy road. The alkaline dust was no longer a mere cloud hovering fitfully over us; it was a thick cloak which enveloped us entirely. Our canteens had been exposed to the sun since early morning; they were blistering hot and the water in them was fairly sizzling. After the first hour the men began to drop, overcome by the terrible heat or half-suffocated by the stifling dust. At every few yards along the road we saw an infantryman, lying exhausted on his pack; some few were bleeding from the mouth. The company which formed the rear-guard, marching a few hundred yards behind the main column, was continually busy, aiding the ex-

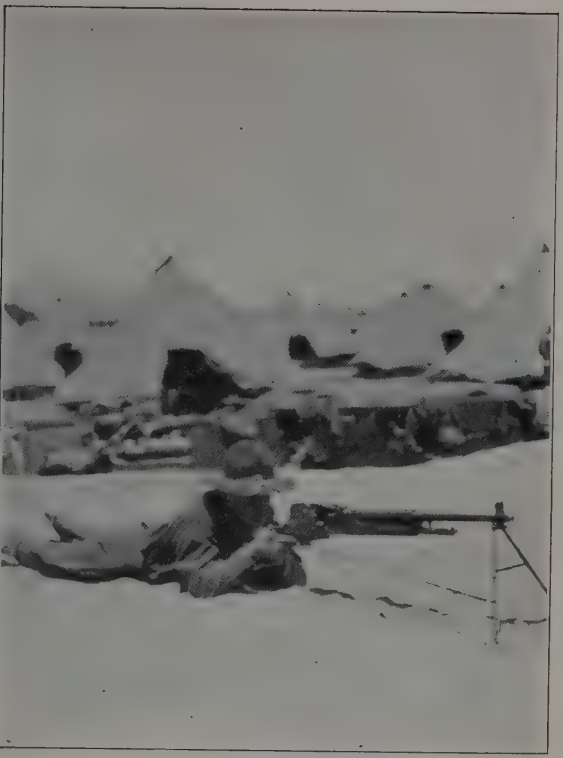
hausted and placing under arrest those whose illness was obviously imaginary.

One of those baffling maneuvers, the object of which was problematic, took place after we had marched several miles. We were ordered to detach ourselves from the main body, and to take a path to the right, in which the loose sand was several inches deep. No sooner accomplished than the command came, "Double time." Already we were hot, panting, and half-choked with dust and thirst. Yet double time was ordered and double time we did for perhaps a half-mile. Through cactus and mesquite, ankle-deep in sand, swearing in no moderate tones, we ran. Finally, after having covered twice the necessary distance, we again rejoined the column and took our former position.

"Pretty soft for the machine guns. No rifles to carry," shouted an infantryman.

I looked at my mule. He was decidedly uncomfortable, and rolled his eyes viciously at me. Gladly would I have exchanged Al for a rifle at that time.

At four o'clock in the afternoon we arrived at our new camp, having made ten miles in the



THE AUTHOR, WITH A MACHINE GUN

course of the afternoon. The corral was quickly made by driving two iron pins, between which stretched fifty feet of rope. The mules were watered in an irrigation canal and tied up; another day's work was finished. I wandered down to the road in search of water. All along the road there were large tin tanks, some of them filled with water. Two guards were stationed over each to prevent any waste, and to regulate the use of the precious liquid. I went up to one of the tanks.

"What regiment?" the guard asked.

"Eighth Massachusetts."

"This is Ohio. Have to go to your own tank."

"Come on, — just one drink."

"Sorry, Jack, but I've got my orders and the officer is watching me over there."

I wandered along to the tank which should have held our water. It was empty; so I went to the next one, which belonged to the Ninth.

"What regiment?"

"Ninth," I said, smiling.

"Let's see your tag."

"I guess it's no use, then," I answered, for my identification tag was marked "8 Mass."

As I stood at one side, wondering how to get my water, a group of men came to one of the tanks and demanded a drink. They were refused the water as it did not belong to their regiment.

"Come on, then, boys. To hell with the guards," shouted one, as he rushed at the tank.

About ten men followed, while the guards vainly tried to stop them. At first they protested weakly, but when they saw an officer approaching, they used the butts of their rifles. A moment later nine men were running down the road, drinking greedily from their canteens. They were happy; they had water. By the side of the tank there were two who had been knocked unconscious by the guards. Shortly they were carried on stretchers to the hospital.

As I did not care to use such heroic methods, I determined to employ strategy. I soon convinced a man from the Ninth that I badly needed the loan of his identification tag, so he let me take it. Thus armed, I proceeded again to the tank.

"What regiment?"

"Ninth."

"Your tag?" He glanced at it.

"Pass."

At last, I had a drink of water.

We were stationed a mile from the combined villages of La Tuna, Texas, and Anthony, New Mexico. The state line ran through the center of the town. As soon as we could break away from camp, several of us walked to the village. As we reached its outskirts, I gave a howl of delight, and broke into a run. My friends thought surely that the heat had affected me, until they saw the reason for my aberration. On the piazza of a small farmhouse, there was a sign, "Fresh Doughnuts for Sale." I arrived at the scene one second in advance of my mates. Those doughnuts were the best I ever ate; my enforced diet of "slum and tack" made them taste like the divine ambrosia. A very kind old lady was selling them; she offered us cool spring-water, and, in spite of our doubtful personal appearance, treated us very kindly. Eventually she explained that she had a son in the New Mexico National Guard, who had been called

to duty some time previous to our mobilization. His father, she continued, was a veteran of the Civil War.

Thence we proceeded to the local stores. They were solidly packed with soldiers. Wild-eyed merchants, whose previous dreams of millennial prosperity seemed about to be more than realized, bustled frantically about, unable to supply all their eager customers.

"Gimme a Blackstone," demanded a Guardsman over the cigar-counter.

"Blackstone? You mean washing-powder?"

"No," the other answered disgustedly, "cigars!"

"We don't carry them. But I have some very fine Texas stogies, three for a nickel."

The Guardsman bought the stogies, distributed them among his friends, and went out, explaining, "They have n't got anything human in this God-forsaken country. Everything is Texas this and Texas that and is just as bad as the place it's called after. Still," — inhaling the stogie appreciatively, — "this is better than nothing — yes, much better."

After half an hour of foraging, we were able

to appease somewhat our ravenous appetites. Doughnuts, canned peaches, crackers, pastry of doubtful age, some very good honey — all were eaten with great relish.

"Nothing can kill us now," murmured a friend, as he devoured his seventh doughnut. Then seizing a dusty cream-puff, "Pretty good way to pass off, anyway, — eh, what?"

Our supper naturally created an inordinate thirst, so we looked around for water. The merchants, fearing that their supply would be exhausted, had turned off the faucets.

"How about a glass of beer?" suggested one. "I see the California bar beckoning to us."

"Not such a bad idea," we assented.

We strolled across the tracks, but were informed by guards that only officers might indulge. Thereupon we walked around to the side-entrance, where a line was forming in the alley.

"Want something?" asked the guard. "This gentleman here," pointing to a decrepit Mexican, "will get it. But stand in line. There's four others before you."

Soon we obtained each a bottle of beer, by

paying a nickel extra for the service. It was ice-cold, and certainly an improvement on alkaline water. As we left, we heard the guard explaining conscientiously: "My orders is not to let any soldiers, but only officers, into this joint. I ain't; am I?" he demanded virtuously.

We were forced to admit that he was carrying out the letter of the law.

We returned to camp well satisfied with our trip. As he saw the never-ending stream of soldiers entering the town to spend money, one of my companions said: "This town will be rich when we leave. That will make about two hundred more votes for Wilson, this election."

Which proved to be "more truth than poetry."

When we got back to camp, we found the company discussing excitedly several reported deaths, due to the day's march. Although this rumor was later found to be either fictitious, or greatly exaggerated, it did not then add to our happiness.

The next day we remained at the same place. Affairs went on smoothly enough; a windmill, where one might procure good water, was dis-

covered a short distance away; plenty of food was available in the local stores. It was evident that we had disturbed the home-life of a multitude of rabbits, as almost hourly one appeared, scampering in wild confusion among the tents, with a crowd after it. Many were caught and held temporarily as pets. At one time during the day I encountered one of the men who had a most melancholy appearance.

"What's the trouble, Bill?" I asked.

"You know that big stiff in the same tent with me?" he replied indignantly. "Well, when he was asleep, he rolled on my rabbit."

The fifth day of our march took us to Mesquite, twelve miles away. It was a decidedly unpleasant trip, as usual, yet not so dusty or stifling hot as the last march had been. We entered a long field, extraordinarily free from cactus and burrs, and pitched camp. Two hundred feet to the rear was an irrigation ditch, some ten feet wide, by three feet deep. Within fifteen minutes after our arrival this ditch was dotted with thousands of naked figures, splashing, swimming, and howling delightedly. For we had not had a bath for three days. The

water was very dirty and filled with accumulated refuse, but it was cool and refreshing. During the afternoon, many thousands took advantage of this blessing and enjoyed an impromptu bath.

The town — if such it may be called — consisted of one store, about ten houses, and a Santa Fé station, constructed from a freight-car. As mess was fairly good, we did not go foraging until the early evening. And the inexplicable occurred — it rained.

Although we were drenched, a number of us determined to lay in a supply of provisions at whatever cost. When we reached the store, we found at least fifty soldiers clamoring for admittance. A guard was at the door, supported materially by the presence of a commissioned officer. The crowd had become so unmanageable that the harassed store-keeper had been obliged to ask aid from the authorities. As one man came from the crowded store, another was allowed to enter. As a result of the restraint imposed, the owner, assisted by his wife, daughter, and hired man, whom he had impressed into service, was able to cope with the demands

for his stock. Several weeks previously I had had occasion to stop at this very store on a Sunday afternoon while I was making a motorcycle trip. At that time, the store-keeper had been sitting on the counter — a picture of idleness; his sole patrons were then two Mexicans, who were reclining on the doorstep, probably without buying anything. By comparison, the present scene of activity was striking.

Eventually, my turn to enter came. I quickly made a few purchases — crackers, a can of peaches, milk chocolate, and tobacco — and withdrew. I found to my sorrow that my financial assets amounted to six cents. That would never do. I went to the station and found a Guardsman in charge of the telegraph. Through his kindness I was allowed to send to my revered parent in Massachusetts — collect — a clamorous appeal for funds to be wired me at Las Cruces. Then I prayed earnestly that the message would arrive at its destination, for I did not relish the prospect of mess, unsupplemented by purchasable nourishment.

Drinking-water was very scarce at that village; only the alkaline variety was available.

As I had an uncanny aptitude for procuring water, regardless of the time or place, I was unanimously elected "water-boy" of my squad. I accepted the honor, and each morning set out before the march, with the canteens and a large water-bag, which held our reserve. On the morning after our arrival at Mesquite, I was in great perplexity. It would never do to bring back alkaline water. I wandered about before the store and suddenly spied a watering-cart, which was used to carry drinking-water. No amount of pleading would move the driver to fill my bag and canteens. I noticed, however, that there was a small leak in the rear of the cart. One by one I filled the canteens as the water trickled out. At the end of an hour all my receptacles were full and my reputation was saved.

We started for Las Cruces at noon, passed Mesilla Park at three, and soon came within sight of our destination. High in the air, suspended by kites, there flew a banner bearing the legend, "Welcome to Las Cruces." The town was decorated with flags; the streets were filled with the inhabitants, who gave us such a

demonstration as we had not received before. We passed through the town and reached the camping-ground. The large banner was now directly overhead. Suddenly some one shouted, "My God! The town dump."

And so it proved. The ground, uneven and covered with thick bushes, was strewn with every variety of refuse.

"Welcome to Las Cruces, boys!" cried a soldier, simulating the movements of a head-waiter ushering patrons to a table. "Nice green grass, plenty of ice-water, door-knobs, all modern conveniences." Then, as he again regarded the site with disgust, "Welcome! Oh, hell!"

It took an hour to put the grounds into proper shape. Many months' accumulation of tin cans, bottles, barrel-hoops, and rusty wire had to be cleared away; the remains of what appeared to have been a fox were gathered and buried without ceremony. The men then razed the bushes with their bolos and set up the tents.

Soon I decided to visit the local telegraph-office, as I needed money to carry on a projected purchasing campaign in the town. At the office there was a placard, "Closed until

seven." As it was now only six, I determined to call upon an old friend of mine who was engaged in a large confectionery store. Three years previous I had attended school in Farmington, Maine. The candy store and general rendezvous there was run by "Joe" Norton, a firm friend of all the boys. After entering college, I had heard that "Joe" had gone to the Southwest. On one of my motor-cycle trips, I had visited Las Cruces, and, as it was very warm, had patronized a soda-fountain. The person in charge of the store was none other than my friend "Joe." Now I was rather the worse for wear; as I had not washed since morning, I was coated with dust, and I had not shaved since leaving El Paso. Nevertheless, I called upon "Joe" and was cordially received. He was very busy preparing for the anticipated rush on the store, so I went into the back room with him while he busied himself with his work. Shortly Mrs. Norton, with whom I was well acquainted, came in, bringing supper for her husband. On learning my predicament — for I had left camp before mess — she left the store and soon returned with good things to

eat. I demolished several jelly-rolls, consumed innumerable sandwiches, and finished supper extremely full, but very much ashamed of my appetite. When I left, I had accepted an invitation to call again. It was very pleasant to meet real friends again after being among strangers for months. And such kindnesses are those which one always remembers and can never sufficiently repay.

At the telegraph-office I found my money waiting, to my great joy. Dad had "come across" nobly. As the first event on my programme was a hot bath, I went to a hotel and hired one. For the first time since I had left Worcester — three months and a half before — I crawled into a tub; for a half-hour I scrubbed and splashed and enjoyed myself hugely. Then a shave and I felt clean once more. When I emerged, I found the little town simply teeming with Guardsmen. The barber-shops, baths, and stores were overcrowded; the bakeries sold their entire stock within a few hours. Las Cruces, with its few thousand people, had never seen such throngs within its borders. And since with the coming of the soldiers there came also

the Midas touch of prosperity, they welcomed us, and now that we are gone, no doubt they hope that we will visit them again.

On the following day we were not required to drill, but had to stay in the camp during the morning. After the noon mess, passes were granted to town. On the ground that I had left the night before without permission, I was refused the privilege. Nevertheless, I was too greatly attracted by the thought of an afternoon's liberty and too disgusted with the monotony of the surroundings to stay in camp, so I walked down to the main street again and purchased various supplies. My absence had not been noted when I returned. I spent the early evening in writing letters by candle-light in the ambulance, and at eight-thirty I went to the post-office. It seemed that I had been selected for stable guard during the night. The top-sergeant called for Batchelder, but he did not appear.

"Anybody seen Batchelder?"

"Have n't seen him since afternoon. I met him downtown," some one said, thus innocently signing my death-warrant. When I re-

turned at nine-thirty I was informed that I should have extra duty for the remainder of the trip and that my pass privilege was taken away for a week after our arrival at El Paso. But the meal Mrs. Norton had given me was worth several weeks of extra duty, so I did n't mind greatly.

At six o'clock that day the newspapers came out with big head-lines, announcing that orders had been issued for the return of the Massachusetts troops. For some time the camp rang with cheers; men danced wildly around, embracing one another.

"Just let me see old Summer Street once more."

"Well, Jack, I'll meet you at the Hayward three weeks from to-night."

Then they grew quiet; each one sat down on his blanket, and looking far beyond that sea of tents, fading away in the twilight, saw a home in Massachusetts where the family was happy with the thought of their boy's return; and then again, perhaps, the little girl ——. With a faint smile on his face the soldier forgets for a time his present surroundings and lives in the future, on

that day when he shall return again to those he loves. And soon, in apparent confirmation of the unofficial report, there came the order that the Massachusetts brigade should be detached from the main column in the morning and return at once to El Paso.

Early the next day we rolled our packs and started for Camp Cotton. There was no grumbling at the fast pace; one only desired to cover the miles, and that as quickly as possible. Upon reaching Mesquite again at noon, we received with disappointment the command to pitch camp. Why not let us go on? we asked impatiently. Once more a general rush was made for the irrigation ditch. As I was preparing for my swim, a comrade came up and said mysteriously, "Just come with me if you want a nice private beach all for yourself."

We crossed the ditch and went beyond it for fifty yards; behind a long fringe of green bushes ran a stream of clear water, with sandy bottom.

"Trust me to find the select places; — eh, what?"

I commended his choice; the water was clean

and the sandy bottom much superior to the mud of the ditch. We swam for an hour and returned to camp.

Toward evening it rained, making the place damp and uncomfortable. Our lieutenant, a veteran of the Islands, at once suggested that we build fires to dry our clothes and blankets. A general scramble for dry wood ensued. After considerable searching I managed to get a good-sized pile in front of my tent. As I was trying to coax the tiny fire into a blaze, I saw a hand reach for my pile of wood.

"Hey! This is no free lunch. Get your own wood," I remonstrated indignantly.

I heard a chuckle and looked around.

"I beg your pardon, sir," I added weakly, for I recognized Lieutenant Henderson.

"I thought you needed a little help, son. Let me show you how to start it up."

Thanks to the skill of the Lieutenant, I soon had an excellent fire before my tent. Such incidents as this, carrying evidence of real interest in the welfare of the men, did much to create a better understanding between officers and common soldiers.

Later in the evening I joined a group of men who were talking in the cook-tent. They were veterans of the Cuban and Islands campaigns and were living over their experiences.

"Were you at ——?" one would ask.

"Well, rather. I was on guard when the attack was made."

"You don't mean it! Remember the relief party that came up the next morning? I was in that."

They spoke of various battles, rehearsed individual parts they had played in them, related incidents which never went on reports or appeared in the newspapers. It was intensely interesting. The campaign in which we were now engaged seemed to be the merest play when viewed in the light of their stories of hardships and suffering.

The 9th of October saw us again at Anthony, which we reached after a very comfortable march. There were rumors that we were to march to El Paso, now nineteen miles away, in one day, but they proved to be without foundation. We marched only to the Borderland Inn and again pitched camp. Since the brigade had

been separated from the division, it had been able to make much better time; there were not the frequent and discouraging halts which are inevitable in the march of many thousands. Our last night at the Inn was decidedly unpleasant. Immediately after evening mess, rain began falling, first in fitful showers, and finally in a drenching downpour. Fires were built, but they did not flourish, as the continuous torrent drenched the fuel. At seven-thirty, I decided to turn in, so I put on three extra pairs of socks, a sweater, an overcoat, spread the poncho on the ground, and wrapped my blanket around me. My bunk-mate had preceded me, and as I lay down he cursed me profoundly for disturbing him.

"I expect to float away before morning," he confided. "There is a lovely pool of water around my feet. Oh, damn this tent! It's leaking in a new place and the water has filled my ear."

During my preparations I had necessarily brushed against places in the canvas. These soon yielded rivulets, since every part of the tent that one touched began to leak at once.

Sleep was out of the question. The water trickled eternally, wetting my head and dampening the blankets. My colleague rolled slightly and down came the tent.

"Batch, you —" I will not repeat the volley of expletives. "*Why* did you pull this thing down? It 's bad enough when it 's up!"

"You did it yourself!" I answered indignantly. "Now, get out and fix it!"

"Fix nothing!" he spluttered. "I shan't move!"

"Suit yourself," I replied carelessly, as if the soggy mass of canvas which covered me was a delight.

Shortly I heard a stifled voice: —

"Batch."

"What is it?"

"Are you going to fix this damned thing?"

"Certainly not."

"Well, neither am I."

"All right."

Another minute passed. Then: —

"Batch."

"What?" sleepily, although sleep was farthest from my mind.

"Let 's both fix it."

"All right."

And so we crawled out from the ruins of our little nest and, within a few seconds, the tent was again set up. But what a heap of soaked blankets and clothing was beneath it!

My companion peered into the scene of confusion.

"Just like the Copley-Plaza?" [1] he volunteered.

"Exactly," I assented gravely.

We then decided to attempt to dry ourselves at one of the few remaining fires, as the rain had abated to a slight drizzle.

I poured the water from my shoes, put them on, donned my poncho, and spent the next hour before the flames resignedly, as I had decided that there was no use in trying to keep dry. Every one was in bad humor; wordy conflicts occurred constantly and actual fights were narrowly averted. During the evening one of the men approached another on the subject of matches.

"Got any matches? I want to start a fire."

[1] A luxurious Boston hotel.

"My last box, so be careful of it. You can't start a fire in this rain, anyway."

Soon another man joined our group.

"You ought to see Brown," he said. "He sure is an awful nut. He's down in front of his tent trying to start a fire. No paper at all, but he just lit a box of matches under a pile of wet wood and expected it to burn."

"My matches!" groaned the victim. "But here he comes now. I'll attend to him."

"Brown," he shouted. "Where 's my matches?"

"Used 'em up," announced Brown cheerfully. "Rotten country, is n't it? Nothing will burn."

"Well, you —" Another page of unprintable language. "Did n't I tell you they were all I had? There is n't another box this side of El Paso," he moaned.

"Sorry; here 's a dime. Buy some more. Did n't know you wanted those."

"Buy some more," thundered the erstwhile owner of the precious tinder. "Where? At the corral?" And with perfect sarcasm, "Or shall I ask the Colonel for some?"

"Well, if you feel that way about it, I'll see if I can borrow some more." And he left us.

In a moment he returned with another box.

"Pinched 'em from Smith, so keep it dark. Did n't want you to burst a blood-vessel or anything."

"Much obliged, Brown. Sorry I went up in the air. But say," he continued, "you *are* an awful nut to try to start a fire in this rain, just the same."

The rest of the evening was spent in vigorous condemnation of the army in all its branches.

"Join the army and see the work," mimicked one, calling to mind the recruiting posters.

Eventually we all managed to sleep, or rather doze, until reveille. The morning was crisp and cold. The rain had stopped during the night, and the moisture had largely disappeared into the absorbent sand. In contrast with the night before, we all felt good-natured and "full of pep." The nine-mile hike could not start too quickly for us. Promptly at seven-thirty we began the final lap of our march. We cracked jokes, sang, and cheered; even Al seemed to regard me almost benevolently. The sun shone,

but not with its accustomed fury; the sands no longer burned. It was as though some one had poured water upon a sizzling pan and had rendered it cool and tactile. By ten, we had passed the smelter; a half-hour later we were met by the band, which escorted us noisily through the city. At eleven-thirty, we arrived at Camp Cotton once more.

"Believe me, I shall never kick about this old camp again. It's a good place to stay and a bad one to leave," cried a soldier, joyous at his home-coming.

"You said it," came the chorus.

"How strange the old home seems," quoted another, observing the improvements.

For during our absence those who had been excused from the march had cleaned the camp thoroughly, constructed new incinerators, and improved generally the appearance of our tented home.

"Look at that canteen! No more canned Willie for mine," cried Smith, as he rushed off to revel in the delicacies which that institution afforded.

"Give me my mail!" howled another. "I

must have about fifty letters," he surmised modestly. For the forwarding of our mail while on the great hike had been decidedly irregular.

The afternoon was passed pleasantly in taking shower-baths, dining sumptuously and frequently at the canteen, and answering the piles of accumulated letters. And when taps blew again we all rejoiced in the possession of comparatively soft bunks and comfortable sleeping-quarters. After all, I decided, give the soldier enough to eat and drink, a good place to sleep, and he will be content.

The following day I was put on kitchen detail for a week to ponder my indiscretion of roaming at Las Cruces. As my pass privilege was automatically cut off upon our arrival, I did not consider this a great hardship. I was also on good terms with the cooks — an inestimable boon. So I removed my shirt and leggins in a professional manner and began the interminable task of scrubbing pots and peeling potatoes. I had for working-partner a man impressed from the Supply Company, which messed with us. After a day or two we connived a system by which we could finish work in time

to have an hour's liberty in the morning, two hours in the afternoon, and complete suspension of duties at seven-thirty in the evening. One morning he would build the fires and prepare the vegetables (i.e., potatoes), while I scrubbed pots. The following day, we reversed the order of our tasks.

CHAPTER XIII

HOME

We received no definite orders concerning our return home; it was semi-officially reported that we should leave as soon as the Georgia troops arrived. The troops from that State proved to be very elusive. On one day the papers stated that they were a hundred miles from El Paso, and would arrive to-morrow. The following day we were edified by the report that they would leave Georgia in about three days. This rumor would be given a death-blow by a market-man, who claimed he had taken their order in the railroad yards of the city.

On Saturday, the 14th of October, the Fifth Regiment packed and entrained for home. We were to follow "when the Georgia troops arrived." Every one was in a high state of excitement and uncertainty. One night a parade was formed by several hundred men. They bore a banner, "We want to fight or go home." The

officers did not take kindly to this demonstration; it was promptly broken up and the ringleaders placed in the "jug."

Saturday morning I received a telegram from my father, advising me to apply for a furlough and come home by myself, as the early return of the regiment seemed to be a certainty. I immediately made my application "through military channels," and awaited the results expectantly.

The same day was pay-day; our overdue September money was given us. That night half the camp went to the city and indulged in a celebration, both because of our return from Las Cruces and on account of the prospect of leaving Texas, that El Paso will long remember. Long after taps a steady stream of participants filtered through the streets to camp; some of the more belated arrivals did not reënter the fold until the next afternoon.

On Monday I heard nothing of my furlough. In the evening I went with a few friends to the camp of the Twenty-third, and watched some excellent boxing-matches. The militiamen won several more championships from the regulars,

much to the delight of the several hundred of the Guardsmen who attended the bouts.

At nine o'clock Tuesday morning I was tearfully peeling onions in the cook-shack when an orderly came from headquarters.

"Private Batchelder?" he asked.

"The same."

"You will report at once to the Adjutant; your furlough has arrived."

"Gus," I said to the cook, "I must leave you. I will return to peel these onions in about ten years."

At headquarters I soon concluded the necessary formalities, and walked back to my company street with my fifteen-day furlough, undoubtedly the happiest person in Texas. I passed in my ordnance property, packed my trunk, and proceeded to the city, where I bought a ticket for Worcester, Massachusetts, on a train leaving at 6 P.M. The afternoon went very slowly; I returned to camp, said good-bye to my companions, and started again for town. As I reached the limits of the camp, I looked back for a moment at that great sea of khaki tents which had been my home for four months.

Every portion of it was filled with memories. And in spite of my joy at leaving, there was just a shade of regret, such regret as one experiences at leaving a familiar place, no matter how unpleasant may have been the incidents connected with it. Camp Cotton! Shall I ever see you again, with your tents, your drill-ground, your cindered streets? And if I do, what will be my position? Will I live within your borders again as a soldier, or will I, a civilian, point you out as my former home? I often wonder.

A short time before the departure of my train, I went to the station and found a group of friends waiting for me. Over a "bowl of suds," we toasted Texas appropriately, and also their speedy return to Massachusetts.

As the train left the station, I no longer felt any regret; I was too happy at the thought of seeing my family and friends again. I had a pleasant journey. I spent most of the time, after we had left the Southwest, in answering such questions as "Is it really hot down there?" in discussing the policies of the Administration, and the border situation. The strangers I met on the train were very kind to me; throughout

the trip, cigars and other bounties were heaped upon me. I came due north to Colorado, then passed through Kansas City and Chicago, and arrived at Worcester on Saturday, October 21, at ten o'clock in the evening. Home once more! How much that word meant to me after my four months' absence!

My company followed two weeks later. (The Georgia troops finally arrived.) On November 15 we were assembled on the drill floor of the Cambridge Armory. A federal officer read the words: "This organization is hereby mustered out of the active service of the United States." Our border service was finished!

CHAPTER XIV

THE EFFECT OF THE MEDICINE

At the time of writing, Pershing's column is back in the United States, the National Guard has returned from the border, and the mobilization of 1916 has faded from the mind of the American; although the murder of Americans sometimes occurs south, or even north, of the Rio Grande, it is crowded to the bottom of the sporting page by daily accounts of the more spectacular massacres of our citizens by the European species of outlaw. The Mexican situation has been eclipsed by more momentous problems.

But a month or two ago, some one, who was immediately called a "kill-joy," asked, "Was this mobilization successful?"

"Of course," came the impatient answer. "Fine thing for the boys. Splendid training."

"But was not the direct purpose of this move to pacify Mexico and put an end to the outlawry?"

This was grudgingly admitted. But even

after the majority of the Guardsmen had been recalled, the raids took place frequently and the murder of Americans continued to be the favorite pastime of the Latin-American exponents of "frightfulness." At present there seems to be a lull in these sanguinary proceedings; possibly it is that which precedes the proverbial storm; probably it is caused by a delay in the remittances of German gold. However, the situation still requires the presence on the border of nearly all the American troops stationed in the United States. And the Zimmermann project showed that the Mexican menace, though not overwhelming at this time, is still much more than an idle dream. Yet after four months of misery on the deserts, the Guardsmen have been recalled and Mexico has been forgotten.

Nevertheless, many things were accomplished by the mobilization of the National Guard which should not be overlooked. One hundred thousand men, as a result of the severe training, returned to their homes in the best of physical condition. The four months of outdoor life gave many a foundation of health which will, in years to come, prove of great benefit to

themselves and their children. Yet to offset this great blessing, there remains the lamentable fact that many were absolutely ruined, or at least financially crippled, as a direct result of their trip to the border. Positions were lost, mortgages were foreclosed, and bills went unpaid; in spite of the urgent need at home, some found it impossible to obtain either a furlough or a permanent discharge. One of the greatest problems was that of those men who were buying homes on the installment plan; when their wages were cut off, the payments necessarily stopped, leaving the family subject to ejection. Countless positions were lost for good; many small business ventures collapsed entirely during the absence of their promoters. "Yet," it may be said, "that must be expected in time of war." Yes, it must be expected in time of war; but was it a time of war?

And if it were a time of war, is it right that one man in a thousand should carry the burden alone, abandon his calling for that of a soldier, while the other nine hundred and ninety-nine remain at home untroubled by business calamity or financial disaster? Should not the burden

be borne by the entire country, rather than by the absolute minority?

Until the 1st of January, 1917, the average American agreed with Mr. Bryan that this is the best country in the world, and, should occasion demand, "the flower of American youth would rise to arms" and lay the world at its feet. "Sure! We could raise a million men overnight," he quoted dramatically, while his hearers applauded and nodded approvingly.

We are now troubled by the practical application in the past of this optimistic theory and the false sense of security which it caused. We have men enough in the country, but practically none of them knows how to carry a gun, to say nothing of shooting it. At present, the country is swept by a wave of patriotism, due to the long-deferred action of our Government against the European barbarians. Recruits for the National Guard, the Army, and the Navy, are flocking to the colors. But they represent only a distinct minority of the men capable of bearing arms. And there is no doubt that if the war-scare should subside to-morrow, the recruiting also would stop, as it did when the prospect of

fighting on the border vanished. The country would soon be in its helpless condition of two months ago. Possibly one man in a thousand is drilling at a time when warfare seems inevitable. How about the others? Many, of course, are waiting for a call for volunteers. But the Civil and Spanish Wars showed the utter incapacity of a volunteer force; we may have to launch our troops against the most powerful war-machine that the centuries of combat have produced. And how about the slackers — those who will refuse to go, either from cowardice or from selfish motives? Is their duty to the country any less than that of the men who volunteer? There is only one means of forcing every man to "do his bit" in time of need, and that is compulsory service.

But let us return to our reserve force. Most important of all, the border experiment showed that the National Guard as a means of defense or offense is an absolute failure. In the first place, it is not reliable. Out of the entire quota which were ordered to go to the border, only sixty per cent were available for service. Many refused to leave their States. Others were found

to be physically unable to stand the strain and to bear up under the abnormal conditions which existed. An army which is only sixty per cent dependable is of small value. When the troops were assembled at the mobilization camps, unavoidable delays of every kind occurred. The companies had to be recruited to full strength; the sadly deficient supplies of equipment had to be replenished and even then they were incomplete. It was a week before our brigade could start for the border; we left at the earliest possible moment. And the condition of the Massachusetts troops was far superior to that of the majority. Let us suppose that there was pressing, immediate need for the services of the Guardsmen. By the time they could be properly mobilized our shores might be overrun with invaders. We were sent to Texas in wretched condition, lacking the proper accouterments, with imperfect guns, and without ammunition. But most important of all, we had had practically no experience of service conditions. The great number of prostrations during the first few weeks showed that we were physically unable to endure the hardships of a campaign, to

say nothing of maneuvers alone. Imagine the disaster which would have overtaken us had we been required to enter Mexico immediately after our arrival at the border. A few days of ordinary marching on the deserts with the usual equipment would have exterminated practically the entire number, regardless of the condition of the fighting equipment.

The efficiency report of the Militia Bureau of the War Department makes the following statements (the italics are mine):—

> As to the present degree of readiness and fitness for field service of organizations of infantry, the answer in eighty-nine per cent of the reports was either "fair," "poor," "unfitted," "not ready," "wholly unprepared," or the like; 46 reports out of 102 said that under the most favorable conditions it would require six months in the field to have the regiment meet an inferior enemy, and *two years to meet trained* troops; ten reports stated that it was doubtful if organizations inspected would ever become efficient under their present officers.
>
> Of the cavalry, one third of the reports indicated that it would require from six to nine months to make the organizations fit for service against an inferior enemy, and approximately *from two to three years* against trained troops. In six other reports four to six months was consid-

ered the time needed to make them ready for active service.

In the field artillery there were thirty inspections — six of regiments, eight of battalions and sixteen of separate batteries. In seventeen the organizations were reported as unfit for field service.

. . . . . .

None of the engineer organizations was reported as fit for field service. . . .

An examination of the field inspection reports of twenty-four field companies, Signal Corps of the National Guard, *two months or more after muster* into the service of the U.S., discloses the fact that not one of these organizations was considered fit for field service at the dates of inspection. The average length of time considered necessary to make the companies efficient at war strength in campaign was *five additional months of training* under regular army officers as instructors.

Is not this official statement in itself a sufficiently damning testimony to the utter worthlessness of the National Guard in time of real need? If it takes four months for already partially trained troops, how long will it take Mr. Bryan to whip into shape his "flower of American youth"? Slightly more than one evening!

After four months of strict training, our Massachusetts troops were supposed to be in a fit

condition to undertake a campaign. Think of it! Four months to make soldiers of those who were supposed to be able to defend the country at a moment's notice. It is absolutely ridiculous to suppose that two hours' weekly drilling in an armory is sufficient to prepare a man for successful warfare.

Under the present law, those whose enlistment expires are transferred into the reserve, and their places must be filled by new men. We now discover that in event of war, at least four months is necessary to accustom the recruits to service, before they can be expected to engage successfully in warfare. In other words, the American people can count on the National Guard to be ready within two months after the country has been overrun by foes. And it is extremely doubtful if every Guardsman would be willing to sacrifice four months of his time in drilling alone in time of peace, while the rest of the country looks on and does nothing. It is absolutely wrong to ask or expect such a sacrifice from a few. But the official reports show that it is the only way to make an efficient National Guard.

The Effect of the Medicine

Every one has noticed the desperate efforts of the authorities to stimulate National Guard recruiting since the German crisis. The necessity for this is extremely significant. Disgusted at their fool's errand of 1916, hundreds of Guardsmen obtained their discharges on returning from the border; recruiting was at an absolute standstill. And now that thousands of recruits have been impelled by their country's danger to enlist in the Guard, there are just so many men who must be trained before they can fit into its already imperfect mechanism. Four months before they can hope to equal the record of the border troops! To those men who have offered themselves to the Guard since its return, nothing but praise should be given. They are true patriots and are joining the ranks because it is the only thing that they can do at present. But to demand that the National Guard become, under present conditions, an efficient fighting force, is to demand a physical impossibility.

Mr. Rupert Hughes, a well-known writer, formerly a Captain in the Sixty-ninth New York, summed up the matter admirably in a

letter written to "Collier's" some time before the German trouble: —

The labor unions do not approve of soldiers. They make recruiting doubly difficult. Yet the service in the Army has many advantages; the soldier is protected from injustice in many ways, and it is probably impossible, at least at present, to change the conditions of the service materially. But you cannot blind the young man in search of a job to the disadvantages of soldiering, especially not when the first thing that confronts him is the contemptible wage.

Fifty cents a day for the soldier! And a young Italian just off the S.S. Garlic can get $2.50 for standing in a cornfield and meditating on the beauties of nature, or for building a walk. Our soldiers are expected to throw in a little road-building as a part of their gymnastic recreation.

If the Guard had been called out (as it was) rapidly and completely equipped (as it was not), concentrated along the border (as it was), drilled and taught to shoot and skirmish (far more than it was), rapidly replaced by rapidly recruited regular regiments (as it was not and they were not), sent home to appreciative fellow-citizens and restored to its briefly vacated job (as it was not), we should have to-day a splendidly spirited, proud, and willing force of over one hundred thousand citizen soldiers well trained. And they would continue in the armory to perfect themselves for actual service.

As it is, the Guard was called out all of a sudden, the physically unfit replaced by untrained recruits, the regiments hurried to the trains or kept too long in state camps. They were sent down to a wilderness too wild for maneuvers, they were kept in dismal boredom while their jobs were lost, their opportunities missed, their rivals established. They feel that the country has ignored them; they feel that it still underestimates their sacrifice, and is indifferent to their distress. The Guard will come home in a dangerous state of resentment; many of the men will feel perfectly justified in refusing to keep their oaths or obey any future summons. There will be practically no recruiting. For what inducement can the men inside the jail offer to the free men outside? We have now a demoralized Guard; no bigger army than before. A vast amount of money has been spent, millions of debts incurred, and half a year of invaluable time lost.

The crisis is greater than ever. And the need for haste is doubly acute.

And I might add that Mr. Hughes was at the border, saw the entire game from an officer's standpoint, and knows what he is talking about. Every one will admit that his prophecies were absolutely correct. Men left the ranks by hundreds and the Guard was in a deplorable state. The urgent calls for recruits prove that fact.

The European trouble has merely put off the solution of the problem; it has not solved it. In the future, it will hardly be practicable to furnish a war-scare every time the ranks of the National Guard become depleted. Yet that seems to be the only way to induce men to enlist in it.

The American of to-day lives too much in the present and revels excessively in the patriotic glory of the past. Recent events have proved beyond an atom of doubt that there is only one safeguard for the future — *compulsory service.* Our Government is now bewildered at the prospect of an active war with Germany. It could probably get all the men it needed, but it could not train or equip them properly without great delay.

"Compulsory Service." To the average person these two words signify Prussianism, military servitude, or something equally objectionable. "It is inconsistent with American ideals," they cry. This statement is untrue, as a glance at the compulsory militia records of 1792 will show. But if it were inconsistent with American ideals, it is absolutely consistent with

the inherent instinct of self-preservation, which, after all, is the higher law. If at the age of eighteen each boy were required to train for three years, there would be no more difficulty. By training, I do not advocate any drastic treatment. Once a week he should be required to drill at an armory, under the supervision of army officers. The first year he should have a month's training during the summer months at some encampment within his State. The second summer he should have two months' experience; and the final year he should be required to put in three months' actual service on the border. This would not interfere with the boy's progress. Employers would be forced to make allowance for the short time that he is absent. At twenty-one he would be a thorough yet not a militaristic soldier, and could be called upon, at any time, to protect his country. Within a few years twenty million men would be ready, and thoroughly trained for active service. If, for instance, five hundred thousand men were needed, only those without dependents need be called. On this account no family would have to be cared for by employers or aid societies.

Were a larger army necessary, the entire country would bear the burden equally. This would eliminate the great injustice of making a few suffer needlessly, because their husbands and fathers had sacrificed everything to take the place of independents who refused to answer the call. And with such a force protecting our country, no nation would ever contemplate an invasion of it or the disregard for our rights which is now invited by our weakness.

As a result of the canvass, by the Maryland League for National Defense, of the Episcopal clergy of that State, the "Army and Navy Journal" quotes the following figures:—

Number of replies to date, December 27, 1916.	121
Number who favor universal service.....	95
Number who will speak on it.....	71
Number against it.....	20
Number undecided.....	6

Yet, none will contend that the clergy is essentially a militaristic or bloodthirsty body. They are thinking men. They favor compulsory military service.

The legislatures of several States have officially recommended its adoption. Ballots taken at the larger colleges of the country have fa-

vored it overwhelmingly; in this case the voters were those who would be actively involved if military training were compulsory. The foremost authorities in this country, not mere theorists, but men of wide military experience, state plainly their conviction that this is the only means by which our rights may be protected. As we, who have seen the results of the old system, meet at the armory, the question naturally comes up:—

"What will happen next?"

"Compulsory Service."

"I'm for it," says one.

"And I." "And I." "And I," comes the chorus.

Compulsory service may not be adopted immediately, but its ultimate success is inevitable. The entire army, the entire National Guard, the thinking man favor it, not as preparedness for war, but as preparedness against war, and a surety of the "Peace with honor" which we have hitherto lacked. Let us have it before it is too late!

THE END

The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE . MASSACHUSETTS
U . S . A

S0-BTN-804